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SERMONS  
BY THE REV.  
J. BATTERSBY.  

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Third Series









SERMONS.



REV  
of Geo.

TWELVE  
SERMONS,

PREACHED AT

VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

BY

THE REV. J. BATTERSBY,

VICAR OF ST. SIMON'S CHURCH, SHEFFIELD.

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THIRD SERIES.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THIS small volume contains twelve Sermons, some of which give considerable prominence to those deeper truths of the glorious Gospel, which have always been held as most precious and comforting by the spiritually-taught and experimentally-tried children of God.

If any Christian brother or sister should deign to read either one or more of these Sermons, I would respectfully suggest that every doctrine be tested by the *Only Infallible Standard*—THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD. For, “Whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.” *Article VI. Church of England.*

“Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.”—*I Thess. v. 21.*

J. B.

*October, 1878.*





# “JOINED UNTO THE LORD.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 1ST, 1877.

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*In St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, the 6th Chapter, and the 17th verse.*

“BUT HE THAT IS JOINED UNTO THE LORD IS ONE SPIRIT.”

BEFORE opening up the words of our text we must notice the persons to whom they refer. *He* or *We*; Who are *they*? This will lead us to look at some of the verses which precede the text. In the 11th verse it is said: “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” This is the class of persons spoken of in our text: Persons who have been “washed” in the Blood of Jesus, “sanctified” and “justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” These persons are further described in the 14th verse as amongst those who shall be raised by Divine power. “God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power.” Here is the Resurrection life of the Saints in and by Jesus Christ. It is also said of these persons, in the 15th verse, that they are members of Christ. “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?” Observe the expression, “members of Christ.” Then in the 19th verse it is said that they are the temple of the Holy Ghost. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?” And these persons were not their own. “Ye are not your own.” What reason does the Apostle give? “For ye are bought with a price.” And the price is the precious Blood of the Lamb of God slain from before the foundation of the world. These persons were to glorify God not only in their bodies, but in their spirits which are God's. Now these are the persons that answer to the text when it says: “But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” This is in ac-

cordance with the general view of the Epistle; for when we look into the 1st chapter we read in the 2nd verse: "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." From these words we see who the persons were to whom this Epistle was addressed. They were saints, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, members of Christ, joined unto the Lord vitally by the One Spirit of God.

*We shall now proceed to a consideration of the text. First,—What is it to be joined unto the Lord? And secondly,—What is it to be of one Spirit? These are the two points. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit.*

*We shall speak to the first of these. What is it to be joined unto the Lord? The word for joined is "glued together" to the Lord,—"glued together" to the Lord. How expressive! There is no possibility of getting in between Christ and His members, they are glued together. Now I wish to point out this subject to you under different aspects. Believers are joined unto the Lord thus. In the past the Father joined them to the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ joined Himself to them in time. The Holy Ghost joins them vitally to the Lord in regeneration. And there shall be a joining together hereafter in resurrection glory. What I mean will appear if I give you a few references.*

God's children have been joined together to Christ from the days of eternity. This may be spoken of as eternal union, or as covenant union, or as covenant joining, or any such word may be used as will convey into your minds the idea of *eternal oneness* with the Lord Jesus. Let us look to the 89th Psalm, and see what is said there, for I think the Psalmist speaks upon this very subject. In the 3rd and 4th verses you will read these words: "I have made a covenant with My chosen," "I have sworn unto David My servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My Holiness that I will not lie unto David." Who is David here? You know that "David" means "the Beloved." And with whom did God make a covenant? But with the Beloved One Christ. To whom did He swear, and did not repent? But unto the Beloved One Jesus. Hence it is said unto "thy seed." "His seed shall endure for ever." That is the Church shall endure for ever with Christ, and shall be built up with Him to all generations on the Throne of the Beloved One. "And he shall reign for ever and ever over His children." This is unto all generations. Read again in the same Psalm in the 27th and 28th verses: "Also I will make Him My Firstborn," this is Christ, "higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for Him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with Him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and His throne as the days of Heaven." Then follows an account of the Lord's dealings with His children. "If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My com-

mandments." And did they not violate these ordinances many times? Well, what did the Lord do with them? "Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless." Oh! how blessed are the "Neverthelesses" of God's Book. Did you ever think about them? "Nevertheless My loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My Holiness that I will not lie unto David," nor unto His spiritual seed which is bound up in Christ the Beloved One. "His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." Brethren, this Psalm carries us back to the promised covenant work of our God. It is expressed and brought out in other words in the 8th chapter of Proverbs: Christ was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. He was with the Father, as one brought up with him, He was daily his delight, rejoicing always before Him. Rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, and delighting Himself with the sons of men. Also in the 1st chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, we discover that the Father gave the children of God a standing in Christ from before the foundation of the world. I shall not dwell any longer upon this point. You will see what I mean. Out of this eternal joining, or God giving His people an eternal standing in Christ Jesus, spring all the other joinings. God saves according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Well then, what is the next step in this joining to the Lord? If we have seen the Father's work, let us now notice the Lord Jesus Christ's work. It was revealed in the first promise in the 3rd chapter of Genesis: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpent's head" (verse 15). This promise was renewed to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Then we come to the evangelical prophet Isaiah. In his 42nd chapter, and the 6th verse, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, he says: "I will give Him for a covenant of the people." Christ, then, is to be the covenant of the people, and it is explained unto us, in the 7th verse, what His work shall be. But now, how did He join Himself to us. A little light is thrown upon this when we turn to the 2nd chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, for there you read that the Lord Jesus Christ took our nature,—but not our *sinful* nature. We read in the 11th verse: "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." Of one nature, of one family, and of one God. Hence, the Apostle says: "For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." He is our elder brother. And as such He says: "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren:" declare the Father's name, and all about His covenant and purpose, "To my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." And again, "I will put my trust in Him." Christ trusting in His Father and relying on His promises. And again, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Christ when upon earth, said of His disciples, when addressing His Father: "Thine they were and

Thou gavest them me." Christ and the children stand or fall together. They are joined together. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the *seed* of Abraham." Here we have Christ joining Himself to the *Spiritual seed* of Abraham. "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." Now, you see why Christ stepped down from heaven, and joined Himself to His Church here upon the earth. It was for the very purpose of redeeming her, and bringing her back to His Father, who had first given the Church to Him. Christ's work is no failure. He lived and died to accomplish the work which the Father had given Him to do. His Father saw, and He Himself saw, and the Holy Ghost saw, of the travail of His Soul—and Trinity in Unity was satisfied. And so are all His Spiritual children. Now there are many Scriptures confirming this truth. We might read the 8th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and the 3rd verse: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." And in the 4th chapter of Galatians: In the fulness of time, according to the promise, Christ appeared, and joined Himself to us, taking that body which the Spirit had prepared for Him, rolling back from it the tide of corruption and then Christ filled it with the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The Word was made flesh. God manifest in the flesh. Here is the Lord uniting Himself to us.

The third joining is by the Holy Ghost, vitally and spiritually uniting believers unto Christ. It is the Holy Ghost baptizing or glueing a soul to Christ Jesus. It is in this sense I understand our text. We must bear in mind that we are not joined to the Lord by man, nor by ordinances. He Who joins us unto the Lord is the Holy Ghost. And without this joining no man has any hope of going to Heaven. It is the Holy Ghost who gives man a new heart. He must be born of the Spirit of God, Who alone gives life from the dead. He empties the creature of all self, and self-righteousness. He makes the bride feel ashamed of her filthy garments,—giving her new eye-sight and an enlightened understanding,—that she may see and know her defilement. It is then she wants her Lord, her Saviour, her Husband, her Elder Brother, and wishes to be found arrayed in His white raiment, and in His beautiful garments, even in His best royal robe. When the Holy Ghost shews a man himself in his lost estate, and his need of a Saviour, and further, brings him to rest his all on Jesus, then he is vitally and spiritually joined to the Lord. Stripped of all worldly and carnal adornments, the believer is taken with the beauty of Christ's person,



with the perfection of His work, and with the greatness of His love. This joining of us to the Lord by the Holy Ghost is an evidence or proof that the Father had in sovereign love first joined us to Christ from everlasting, and that in the fulness of time Christ had joined Himself to us. This is the straight line of free grace in the salvation of a sinner. The life of a child of God upon earth is to the praise and glory of His grace, and a token also, that soon he will be joined to the Lord in Glory.

The Lord's children shall hereafter be joined unto Him in resurrection glory and beauty. They shall be changed and made like unto the Lord, —incorruptible—immortal—spiritual—and glorious. Then when they get a sight of their risen, ascended, and glorified Lord, how insignificant all other sights will appear. They will be swallowed up of life and immortality in the admiration of Him to Whom they are for ever joined in glory. Can you imagine it? You cannot; but you occasionally get a glimpse of this glorious sight by the way; something of it is revealed to the child of God even here upon the earth, but when we come at last into His presence, we shall cast our crowns before Him, and say, "Crown Him Lord of all."

I now wish to speak to you in the way of instruction, giving you a few Scriptural illustrations bearing upon this subject of being joined unto the Lord. There are several illustrations in the Word of God bearing upon this point. Some of these are borrowed from earthly objects, and one which I shall name is taken from Heaven, or that eternal and indissoluble union between the Father and the Son as expressed by our Lord Himself in the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel. But more upon this point by-and-bye. The first person that ever shewed me the beauty of these illustrations was the late JAMES A. HALDANE, in a little work of his on the ATONEMENT. It is a small inexpensive book, but one which will repay a careful and thoughtful perusal. It is worth its weight in gold, and yet you may pick it up for less than a couple of shillings. My reference at present is to his chapter "On the unity of Christ and His people." The illustrations which I shall first name are taken from earthly objects. Christ says: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." The branches cannot bring forth fruit without the Vine (John xv. 4, 5). Now, what is the teaching in this parable? Is it not to set forth these two ideas. First, that the branch has its *life* by virtue of union with the vine. It is but one life in the Vine and in the branch. The second idea is *fruitfulness* by virtue of union. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine. How true this is of Christ and believers. They have but one life, and the fruitfulness which saints manifest is by virtue of union with the Lord Jesus Christ. The illustration of the Vine and the branches is not a perfect one of that indissoluble union between Christ and His Church. Why? Because a branch may be withered, cast off, and thrown into the fire to be burned. But such a thing can never befall a living branch of the true Vine—Christ. Hence earthly illustrations must not be pressed too far. The parable teaches what our Lord intended to teach by it—union in life and fruitfulness.

Another illustration is taken from the human body, as recorded in the 12th chapter of this very Epistle. The Apostle speaks of the various members of the body ; the eye, the ear, the hand, and the foot, and yet not one of these can say to the other, "I have no need of thee." God has set the members every one of them in the human body, as it pleased Him. The comely and the uncomely parts God has tempered together. If one member of the body suffers, all the members suffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. The Apostle then applies this illustration, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Now, what is the teaching here upon this subject of union. I think it is this, *mutual sympathy* and *feeling* between Christ as the Elder Brother and the brethren. He can sympathize and feel with us in the sufferings which are left behind in His Body, and there are afflictions which are left behind to His Church. When the Body suffers, Christ suffers. If you touch Christ, you touch His Members. And if you touch His members you touch Christ. He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of God's eye. Christ is afflicted in all the afflictions of His body—the Church. But then this illustration of union between Christ and His Church which is taken from the human body is not to be unduly pressed. A man's hand or foot may be cut off, and yet he may not lose his life. But a perfect Christ could not live if there were any of His members that did not live with Him. Hence, you will see a failure in this earthly illustration if you press it to set forth indissoluble union between Christ and His Church. It does shew us beautifully the *sympathy* and *feeling* between Christ, the Head, and His members, the body.

Another illustration will be found in the 5th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, it is taken from marriage union. "A man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." He then says, "This is a great mystery ; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." What does this marriage union teach us about the mystical union of Christ and believers ? Is it not the mutual *love* and *affection* which exist between Christ and His Church. "Christ *loved* the Church and gave Himself for Her." She is then brought to love Christ in return. "We love Him because He first loved us." I refer you to the Song of Solomon for more upon this point. This marriage union is an earthly illustration, and consequently is not a perfect one to set forth the indissoluble union between Christ and His Church. The husband may die or the wife may die, a dissolution of marriage may take place between husband and wife, but not so between the heavenly Bridegroom and the heavenly Bride.

In the 2nd chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, you will find another illustration. Christ and His Church are compared to a building. Christ is the Foundation Stone, and all believers are spoken of as living stones built upon the Foundation "for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (verses 20-22). What is the teaching of this illustration ? Is it not the *stability* and *firmness* of the Church of God as built upon Christ, so that even the gates of hell shall not prevail

against it" (Matthew xvi. 18). Yet this is not a perfect illustration of being joined to the Lord. For a stone may be taken out of a building, and yet the building may remain. The illustration teaches us the *stability* and *firmness* of the rock on which the Church of God is built, and beyond this we have no wish to push it.

Now, what is the next illustration? Why! the Lord Jesus Christ goes to heaven to bring down a perfect one. And He seems to have reserved this illustration to the close of His ministry here upon earth, that He might give greater comfort to His sorrowing disciples whom He was about to leave. Read the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel with me, beginning at the 20th verse: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be *one*; as Thou, Father, art *IN ME*, and *I IN THEE*, that they also may be *ONE IN US*: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be *one*, even as *WE* are *ONE*: *I IN THEM*, and *THOU IN ME*, that they may be made perfect in *one*; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast *loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.*" Now, my beloved, I ask you where the failure is here? In every earthly illustration of Spiritual and Eternal union there will be some failure found, but in this heavenly illustration there is none. It is a heavenly illustration which the Lord Jesus Christ gives of Himself and of His Church. There is no failure in it. It is perfect. Christ and His Church are eternally One, as the Father and Christ are eternally One. This is indeed eternal union. It stretches into the eternal past when the Father joined all the vessels of mercy unto the Lord. It explains the object of the Son of God in joining Himself to the spiritual seed of Abraham. It reveals the necessity of the Holy Ghost's work in joining us to the Lord by spiritual regeneration. And it inspires us with hope, as children and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, that if we suffer with Him, we shall shortly be glorified together with Him. Christ and His Church are by eternal union One. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." I have now spoken to the first part of my text. I shall have to be more brief upon the second—"One Spirit."

And here I may remark, by the way, that I am very glad to see and meet you all again. We have been a few months separated; but now, through the kindness of our friend, we are permitted to meet in this church. God doeth all things well, to His Name be ascribed all the glory and the praise for the privilege of meeting together. May His Word read and preached this night prove a blessing to our souls!

*We shall now proceed with our Second point.* "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." "One Spirit." This is the effect of being joined to the Lord. Christ and His people are one spirit. Are they? Yes. How is this? Well, does not the Spirit of God dwell in all believers? And does He not dwell in Christ? Believers are the temple of God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. iii. 16). "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost" (I Corinthians vi. 19). The Holy Ghost dwells in Christ without

measure. And He dwells in all the members of Christ in measure to meet their necessities and needs. Christ and His children are one spirit. The Spirit of Christ dwelling in the believer becomes the source of Spiritual thoughts, words, and works. We verily believe that the One Spirit dwells in Christ and in us. "We are one with Christ and Christ with us." Inseparable union. Being baptized by the one Spirit into the one body of Christ, we delight to drink into the one Spirit. I rejoice in these truths of the blessed Gospel of the Grace of God. And when I do feel my feet slipping, as they do sometimes, the comfort of my soul is, not that I have hold of Christ, but that Christ has hold of me by His eternal Spirit.

Christ and believers have but *one Spirit of life*. We do not live by two lives. When Christ gives life, it is eternal life. When a person has Christ, he has life; and when a person has not Christ, he has not life. What a grand thing it is to have eternal life! Some people may mock us, because we boldly declare that Christ has given eternal life to His sheep. We rejoice in the fact that it is eternal life. A spiritual life which knows no end. We are made "alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans vi. 11). "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans vi. 23). We live, but it is by the life of Christ. We hear and know His charming voice. "I live, and ye shall live also." Well, we need not say more upon this. You see that there is only one Spirit of life in Christ and in His people.

There is "*one Spirit*" of truth in Christ and in His people. What did the Lord Jesus say for the comfort of His disciples. The Spirit of truth shall come, and He shall guide you into all truth (John xvi. 13). Christ is the truth (John xiv. 6). Hence the Holy Ghost shall glorify Christ, Who is the truth in the sinner saved. The Holy Ghost never leads a man astray. He never leads persons to trust in lies. He comes into believers as a Spirit of wisdom and knowledge enlightening the understanding and guiding it aright. He always leads a person out of Himself into the truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus. And here it is that the Holy Ghost makes a trembling sinner take his stand for salvation before the throne of God.

Christ and His people have *one Spirit of Holiness*. If the Holy Ghost be as He is declared to be "the Spirit of Holiness," then He dwells in Christ and believers as such (Romans i. 4). Believers are partakers of His holiness (Hebrews xii. 10). Or, as St. Peter has it: "Partakers of the Divine nature" (II Peter i. 4). Not that a Christian is made a god; but He Who is God takes possession of him and makes him reflect His holiness, which is holiness unto the Lord. Some persons are ashamed of being called saints. Why, I do not know. But you know that it has often been said, pointing with the finger of scorn, "There goes a saint." And then there are others who like to be considered Christians, but do not like to be called saints. "Do not call me a saint." "I do not profess to be a saint." The truth is, that if persons be not saints, they are not Christians. A saint means one who is not of the earth, one who is set apart for God Himself by the Holy Ghost. Is a man



ashamed of having the Holy Ghost to comfort, to guide, to teach, and to bring him near to God in Christ. Is he ashamed? Then, he is not worthy of the name of saint nor of Christian. There is but one Spirit of holiness in Christ and His brethren.

There is but "*one spirit*" of *humility* in Christ and believers. We have the humility of Christ spoken of in the 2nd chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, beginning at the 1st verse: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Then in the 5th verse: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." This is the mind which the Spirit of God cultivates in Christians. And what was the mind of Christ? Well, he tells us in the same chapter that though he was God, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," "But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he *humbled Himself*, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Here is the mind of humility which was in Christ. And is it not the humble soul that God looks to? Is it not the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart that God does not despise? And why? Because it is the work of His own hands. It is the work of the Spirit of God. "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word" (Isaiah lxi. 2). "God dwells in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a *contrite* and *humble* spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Christ and believers have one spirit of humility. I do not say that they have the one spirit of humility in the same degree, but they have in quality or kind or nature. The mind in Christ is the mind in believers. They are humbled and exalted together.

There is *one spirit of meekness* in Christ and believers. What does Christ say of Himself? "I am meek and lowly in heart," therefore take My yoke upon you, and learn of me. You shall find rest unto your souls. "Blessed are the meek." Yes! They have been everlastingly blessed in Christ, theirs is the kingdom of heaven, and they shall enjoy the earth (Matthew vi. 3-5). Blessed are the meek and lowly in heart, and though bowed down, yet they shall be raised up and comforted. This is dealing with "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." This is the right standard with which Christians are to be compared. Christians often compare themselves with each other which is not wise. Christ is the only standard by which a Christian is to be measured. When Christians compare their experiences with each other, they often get very wrong. The more advanced are often led to say things which are very discouraging to those who are less advanced in the Divine life. Deal tenderly with the weak. They are the lambs of Christ's flock. Never let one child of God set up his experience as the

standard for another child of God. It is unsafe. It is next to, if not, carnality itself. Christ is the standard, and the only safe standard for all the children of God. "I beseech you," my beloved brethren, "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ," that ye measure each other by the perfect measure of God's Christ.

Christ and believers have *one likeness*. To illustrate what I mean, read I Corinthians, 15th chapter, 45 and following verses: The first man is of the earth, earthy. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy. Adam and his offspring have borne but *one image* or *likeness*. So also is it as regards Christ, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven. He is heavenly, and His offspring is heavenly, and they bear the *image* or *likeness* of the heavenly. Every grace is in Christ in perfection, but its *counterpart* is in each believer. "Out of His fulness have all we received grace for grace." Or, grace answering to grace. Every grace in Christ has its counterpart in the child of God. There is the *one image* or *likeness* in Christ and in all His Saints. He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit. They have the one Spirit of life, of truth, of love, of holiness, of humility, of meekness and gentleness, of obedience, of grace, and glory. And they are changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.

Now this oneness of spirit amongst believers is enforced by St. Paul. And how do you think he enforces it? Well, he does it by *seven ones*. And what are these seven ones by which he enforces oneness of spirit? Let us read the 4th chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians; begin at the 1st verse. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." They had the heavenly call. The Spirit of God had called them out of darkness into light. Now he entreats them to walk: "With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love." This is how Christians are to act one towards another. Well, how does he enforce it? Here let me remark that Christ was kind to His disciples, and exhorted them to manifest the same spirit one towards another. St. Paul enforces the same in this chapter: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." And then he enforces this saying, "there is one Body." There are *many* professing Churches, you say. Yes, *men* have made these Churches. But *Christ* has but *one* Church, and He calls it His Body. And this Body He redeemed unto Himself. And because there is but one body, St. Paul says, "keep the Unity of the Spirit." What is the next "one?" There is "one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." "One Spirit." Why! this is the same Spirit which fills the whole Body, the Church. The one Spirit moving in and filling Christ and all His members. Hence believers are to be of one Spirit—"Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The third "one" is this. "Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." "One hope." I have heard some persons say, "Well, I hope I shall go to heaven." But they can give no reason for the hope that is in them. What would you give for a hope of this sort? Would you like to risk going to heaven upon such a hope? No! I am sure you would not. The one

hope spoken of in my text is Jesus Christ. He is the foundation of your hope. He is "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Colossians i. 27). And, you are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God even our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus ii. 13). Christ is the one hope of the Church. Therefore, be ye of One Spirit. "One Lord." Yes! "One Lord Jesus Christ" (Corinthians i. 8-13). "The Lamb of God," the crucified One; our Brother and our Redeemer. Has He not the right to be our Lord? Then as Lord He shall rule over us. And as there is but one Lord, be ye but of one Spirit. There is also "one faith," one gospel, and one grace of faith, the gospel revealed in Christ and by the Holy Ghost in the sinner's soul. Well, there is "one faith." And as there is but one faith, be ye of one spirit. There is "one baptism." Some say this is the ordinance of baptism. I do not quarrel with those who think and say so. I incline to the opinion that the one baptism of the spirit is meant. This is the baptism I like. Oh! my God! plunge me into Christ! And let me be buried in Him with the Holy Ghost's baptism! There is one baptism, be ye of one spirit. Now these are some of the ones which we observe in enforcing the unity of the Spirit. And there is "One God and Father of all." This is the first Person in the Trinity that is here spoken of,—"Who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Thus the Apostle by these seven "ones" enforces his counsel, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit."

Before concluding this subject, allow me to make use of a very simple illustration, borrowed from a mechanical, or artistic, contrivance. I was standing at a railway station the other night, having some time to wait for the train. I looked up and saw three lights, and each light differed from the other. There was a *white* light, a *red* light, and a *green* light. Well, thought I, after all it is but *one* light, the *medium* makes the difference. "Is there any teaching in this?" said I. Well, I concluded there was. Well, the white says: "all right! all right! the way is clear!" The *red* light says: "Stop! stop! danger!" Then the *green* light says: "caution! go carefully!" "Well," said I, "after all, it is only *one* light. True, the one light passes through different media, but these media answer one great end,—the safety of the passengers." "Well," said I, "is there not some instruction in this?" I think there is. The *one* light behind, is the one light, clear and bright, shining from eternity in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the pure white light which shines in the gospel of the grace of God, and which says, "All right." "The line is clear." "This is the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." "Let the redeemed of the Lord pass on, for the way to Zion is clear." The light is sometimes seen as a *red* light. What then? "Stop! stop! danger!" Now, see how this applies. "Flee fornication." "Danger! ye cannot be the servants of Christ and the servants of Belial. Ye cannot serve idols and serve God. Danger! danger!" "Stop!" "Stop!" Then the light is sometimes seen as a *green* light. "Caution! caution!" Mind how you walk. Do not be enticed over the stile for the sake of a smooth path,

or you will soon be in trouble, and then in Doubting Castle. There is no contradiction in these lights. They have all *one end* in view, the comfort and safety of the heavenly passengers. O God, grant that we may always see and understand, that though the light of Thy Christ shines under varying circumstances, through different media, yet it is to this end, to guide Thy children safely into that everlasting kingdom prepared for them from before the foundation of the world, where they shall see light in Thy light, without any medium, save that of beholding and admiring the beauty and glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen ! and Amen ! !

Sovereign grace ! o'er sin abounding,  
 Ransomed souls the tidings swell ;  
 'Tis a deep that knows no sounding—  
 Who its breadth or length can tell ?  
 On its glories  
 Let my soul for ever dwell.

What from Christ that soul can sever,  
 Bound by everlasting bands ?  
 Once in Him, in Him for ever,  
 Thus the eternal covenant stands ;  
 None shall pluck thee  
 From the " strength of Israel's " hands.

Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus,  
 Long ere time its race began,  
 To His name eternal praises,—  
 O what wonders love hath done !  
 One with Jesus,  
 By eternal union one.

On such love my soul still ponder,  
 Love so great, so rich, so free ;  
 Say, while lost in holy wonder,  
 Why, O Lord, such love to me ?  
 Hallelujah !  
 Grace shall reign eternally.

# “THE PILLAR OF CLOUD & FIRE.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 6TH, 1877.

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*In the 9th Chapter of the Book of Nehemiah, and at the 12th Verse,  
you will read:—*

“MOREOVER THOU LEDDEST THEM IN THE DAY BY A CLOUDY PILLAR;  
AND IN THE NIGHT BY A PILLAR OF FIRE, TO GIVE THEM LIGHT  
IN THE WAY WHEREIN THEY SHOULD GO.”

THIS chapter contains a record of the rehearsal of the goodness of God towards His ancient people Israel, and also a confession of their wickedness and unworthiness of any of His mercies. Turning to the 4th verse, I find that the Levites “cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God.” And then they called unto the people, and said, “Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever : and blessed be Thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.” In these words you have the Name of the Lord magnified and extolled pre-eminently. In the 6th verse they declare that Jehovah is Creator and Preserver of all things. “Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone : Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all ; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee.” Having thus declared that God is Creator and Preserver of all things, they proceed to rehearse the fact that God had chosen their forefather Abraham and his seed after him for the special inheritance which He had prepared for them. “Thou art



the Lord the God, Who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham." When the name is increased in Scripture it is significant of blessing; when it is decreased it is significant of a curse. Abraham's name was increased from Abram to Abraham, a sign of the blessing which God bestowed upon him. "And foundest his heart faithful before Thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed Thy words: for Thou art righteous." Did the Lord ever at any time fail to perform His words, or to keep His oath? Did the Lord ever at any time break His covenant, or alter the thing that had gone out of His mouth? Never! They rehearse this fact in His dealings with Abraham and his seed. "And thou didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red Sea; and shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all His servants, and on all the people of his land: for Thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst Thou get Thee a Name, as it is this day." God is never at a loss to obtain a Name for Himself, whether it be a name for the deliverance and the salvation of His people, or a name for the ruin and destruction of His and His people's enemies. "And Thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors Thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters." Thus the Lord dealt with His enemies and with the enemies of His people. And then follows, in the words of our text, a record of an extraordinary and supernatural event which appeared as the Israelites came out of Egypt, and which continued a standing miracle until they arrived at the borders of Canaan. "Moreover Thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go." The wonderful dealings of God with His people in the wilderness, in giving them the law on Mount Sinai; in supplying them with manna from heaven to eat; in sending forth water out of the rock to quench their thirst; in giving them His Holy Spirit to guide them through the wilderness, are all mentioned in this chapter. Read the 20th verse: "Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not Thy manna from their mouths, and gavest them water for their thirst." They confessed their pride, their folly, their rebellion, their wickedness, and their unworthiness of God's great goodness towards them. Read the 16th verse: "Our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to Thy commandments, and refused to obey, neither were mindful of Thy wonders that Thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage." Their deliverance from Egypt, and the dealings of God with them and their fathers, they ascribe to the grace and mercy of God. Read the 31st verse: "Nevertheless for Thy great mercies' sake Thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for Thou art a gracious and merciful God." These are the two leading thoughts which run through the chapter—the rehearsal of God's

goodness, and the confession of their sin and wickedness. If they were saved, it was not on account of themselves, but because of the loving-kindness, and tender mercy of Jehovah. I presume that this will be the spiritual and practical experience of every child of God that when he lands on the borders of the heavenly Canaan he will have to say: "It is not because of my goodness, nor on account of my merit I am here; but because of Thy mercy and grace, and because Thy loving-kindnesses fail not."

*I shall now direct your attention to our text thus: First, I shall endeavour to show you that the pillar of cloud and fire was supernatural, symbolical, and figurative: and in the second place that this pillar of cloud and of fire was a support, a protection, and a direction to the Israelites in all their journey from Egypt to Canaan.*

*In the first place I shall try to show you that the pillar of cloud and fire was supernatural, symbolical, and figurative.* That it was a supernatural cloud is evident, and that it was one cloud, and not many, although it might strike some persons from what is stated in the text that there were two pillars, a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire—the one to guide by day, and the other to give light by night. But it does not appear to have been so. It was one pillar under two aspects—one aspect by day, as a pillar of cloud to guide the Israelites; the other aspect by night, as a pillar of fire to give light. Now this cloud was *supernatural*. It has sometimes been called a miraculous and extraordinary cloud. It was a cloud of God's special appointment, and for a special purpose. Doubtless, you will say that all clouds are specially appointed. I grant this. But all clouds were not specially appointed for the protection and direction of the Israelites in the wilderness. The supernatural cloud may be referred to in the miracles mentioned by Moses in the 29th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, where we read these words in the 2nd and two following verses: "Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, 'ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land: the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those *great miracles*: yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.'" In one of these verses it is said that they *did* see, and then it is said that the Lord had not given them eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hearts to understand. How is this? Now they all saw the temptations, the signs, and the miracles. Their natural senses were impressed by them. And the one standing miracle to them was the *supernatural* pillar of cloud and fire. The sun did not blot it out, neither did the winds disperse it. Sometimes it stood still, and sometimes it went forward or backward at the pleasure of Jehovah. Many may see the miracles and the works of the Lord with the natural eye, and yet neither see, nor hear, nor understand them in their spiritual significance. I often think it is so with regard to many who profess the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In one sense they see and hear and understand, but in another, that is in a spiritual sense, they neither see, nor hear, nor understand. It is in keeping with this that our Lord says in the 13th

chapter of St. Matthew: "Because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." This is descriptive of one class of professors. Our Lord, however, does not forget to speak of the privilege of real possessors of religion: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." The glorious cloud may be present in our midst, and yet if the Lord remove not the blindness from our eyes and hearts we shall neither see, nor hear, nor understand. Real religion in a man's heart is the work of the Spirit of God. It is as much a supernatural work wrought within, as the pillar of cloud and fire was a supernatural work wrought and appointed for the guidance of Israel through the trackless desert.

This pillar of cloud and fire was also *symbolical*. "Symbolical of what?" you say. It was symbolical of the Lord's presence. Wherever this cloud rested there was the presence of the Lord. In confirmation of this you may read the following Scriptures: "The Lord descended in the cloud" (Exodus xxxiv. 5). And out of this cloud He "proclaimed the Name of the Lord:" "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious." How kindly He speaks out of the cloud. He forgives "iniquity and transgression and sin." It is said again that He spoke to them out of the cloudy pillar (Psalm xcix. 7). The Lord went before them in the cloudy pillar (Exodus xiii. 21). "Thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire." The glory of the Lord appeared in the pillar of cloud and fire (Ex. xvi. 10). These Scriptures which I have quoted confirm the idea that the Lord was present in the cloud, and that He was present for the glory of His people Israel. I shall now show you that the presence of Jehovah in the cloud was the result of a promise to, and of a covenant engagement with, His people; that the presence of the Lord in the cloud was a pledge that He would do for the Israelites all that he had promised to do for them. In confirmation of what I say, let us turn to the third chapter of Exodus, where we shall read that the cry of the people of Israel came up unto the Lord. He saw Israel oppressed by the Egyptians, and resolved to deliver His people out of bondage. The Lord had a chosen instrument for the very purpose,—it was His servant Moses. Moses may hesitate to go to Pharaoh and to his brethren in Egypt; but the Lord says, "I will be with thee." Now read and examine the 10th verse, "Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that *thou* mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Moses demurs, and says: "I,—who am I?" Poor Moses. He felt his weakness. "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And the Lord said, 'Certainly I will be with thee.'" Is not this enough for thee, Moses? "I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." And Moses said unto God, "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, 'The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you;' and they shall say to me, 'What is His Name?' What shall I say unto them?" Moses wished to have full instructions, and



to proceed safely. "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM." Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel—"JEHOVAH hath sent me unto you." "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers:" I beseech you to notice this expression. He is the God of their fathers—their covenant-keeping God,—“the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is My Name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations.” “Go and tell them that I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and that I am coming down to deliver them, and tell them also that “the Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us,” and that you must go out of Egypt, three days’ journey into the wilderness that you may sacrifice unto the Lord your God. In reading this portion of Scripture we see the *promised presence* of God with His people. His covenant He could not break. He appoints the pillar of cloud and fire as the symbol of His presence. Look at the cloud. Lo! I am with you. We read, “Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.” “Mine angel shall go before thee and bring thee into the land of Canaan” (Exodus xxiii. 20–23). Surely this Angel of God was no other than Jehovah Jesus. And again, God said to Moses: “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” “And he said to Him, if Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence” (Exodus xxxiii. 14, 15). “The Angel of His presence saved them” (Isaiah lxiii. 9). How dependent Moses and Israel must have felt! Where is the Angel of God’s presence? Where is the pillar of cloud and fire, the symbol of Jehovah’s presence. They could not move without the directing token. Everything turns upon the presence of God with His people. They had nothing to fear as long as the pillar of cloud was with them. He spoke to them out of the cloudy pillar and instructed them in the way they should go. If it were necessary this pillar of cloud should be either for the defence of His people, or for the destruction of His enemies. It signified that Jehovah Himself was present with His people to preserve and defend them in their journey. The pillar of cloud and fire was an enduring symbol of Jehovah’s presence with His people Israel. He is still present with His beloved people, though not symbolically in a pillar of cloud and fire, but truly and spiritually by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of all believers. The Lord promised His presence to Joshua, to David, and to others, and gave them great victories over their enemies. He has not promised less to His children now than then. What did He say to His disciples when He sent them forth to teach and to preach in His Name? Hear His own words: “Lo, I am with you, always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew xxviii. 20). Wherever two or three are gathered together in His Name there is He in the midst of them. They have His infallible presence with them. We sometimes hear of the infallibility of the Pope, which may well provoke a smile, but every child of God is possessed of an infallible spirit—the Holy Spirit; and of an infallible presence,—the presence of the Lord Jesus, which supersede the teaching and direction

of Pope, Prelate, and Priest. The Spirit of God is an infallible Leader and Guide, and the presence of Jesus with His people is an infallible and unfailing presence. How comforting and encouraging to hear His charming voice when we are tossed with storm and tempest—"Lo, I am with you!" "Fear not!" "Be of good cheer!"

But the pillar of cloud and fire was *figurative*, or so it strikes me. "Figurative of what?"—you say. Figurative of "God manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy iii. 16). It seems to me that this cloud of glory prefigured the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which the glory of the Godhead was shrouded whilst here upon the earth. He Who was "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled Himself" (Philippians ii. 6-8). He was for a little while made lower than the Angels, but afterwards He was crowned with glory and honour, and set over the works of His hands" (Hebrews ii. 7). "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). The glory of Jehovah shone through the humanity. In all the words which He uttered there was a divinity, for "never man spake like this Man." In all His mighty deeds which He performed—in all the miracles which He wrought—in all the sufferings of His death, and in all the glories of His Resurrection and Ascension, we behold the glory of God shining in and through the Man Christ Jesus. The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloudy pillar of Christ's humanity. The Lord has descended in this cloud, and out of it, He has spoken peace to His spiritual Israel. The pillar of cloud and fire pointed heavenward, as if this fact were to note the heavenly origin of the Saviour. I will not, however, speak of things which some might regard as fanciful. Is it not a literal fact that our Lord was on more than one occasion concealed in a cloud? A cloud overshadowed Him on the Mount of transfiguration. His Face did shine as the Sun and His raiment was white as the light, and as the cloud covered them, there came a voice from the excellent glory saying: "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew xvii. 5). The Lord Jesus Christ after His resurrection and after He had borne witness to the same during six weeks, "was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (Acts i. 9). And as He went up in a cloud, so, we are told He will come again in a cloud, or clouds. In the 10th chapter of the Revelation, and the 1st verse, we find Him again spoken of as "clothed with a cloud," whilst His feet are "as pillars of fire." What a beautiful description of the God-Man manifest in the flesh. I take it then that the pillar of cloud and fire was *supernatural*, that it was *symbolical* of the presence of Jehovah, and that it was also *figurative* of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh. I may not have made my meaning sufficiently clear to you, but if what I have already said and what I am about to say should lead you to a study of the subject, I shall feel grateful, and give God the praise.

Let us now proceed to our second head: That this pillar of cloud and fire was for the support, and the protection, and the direction of the Israelites during the whole of their journey from Egypt to Canaan, under all circumstances, and at all times, and in all the way.

Some of you will be saying, "How will He get through all that?" I do not intend to get through it all. I only intend to throw out a few hints for you, that you may be able to think and reflect upon the subject as a whole after leaving this church. This is what I endeavour to do when I address you. My sermons to you are *suggestive* rather than wrought out in detail. I should prefer giving you truth in "lumps," that you may analyse the same at your leisure.

The pillar of cloud and fire was for the *support* of God's Israel. We have this idea from the fact that the pillars of the universe are the supports thereof. Job speaks of the pillars of heaven (Job ix. 6, and xxvi. 11). And the Psalmist speaks of the pillars of the earth (Psalm lxxv. 3). What can we understand by the pillars of heaven, and the pillars of the earth, but the power of God creating, upholding, supporting, and controlling all things in heaven and earth? God is ever present in the universe displaying His powerful support thereof. He upholds all things by the word of His power. The pillar of cloud and fire was ever present with Israel as their support. It reminded them of the power of God which had been, and which was continually being, exercised on their behalf. God's mighty hand and outstretched arm had been made manifest in their deliverances. He still carried them and bore them as on eagle's wings. Jehovah Jesus is our supporting pillar of cloud and fire. His power in life and death, and now at God's right hand in the behalf of His redeemed, is beyond any description that we can give. The church is safe in His hands. She is passing through the wilderness leaning upon the arm of her beloved. Underneath are the everlasting arms of support and safety.

The pillar of cloud and fire was for the *protection* of Israel. Protection? But did this people need any protection in the way? Just remember for a moment where they were, and from whom and what they were to be protected. They were coming up out of Egypt. There was the Red Sea before them rolling high and wide. Oh! these terrible waters! But who are coming after them? Pharaoh and his hosts were behind them. What now? Who can protect this people from their enemies? Let us look at the 14th chapter of Exodus and read the account as given in the 19th and 20th verses: "The angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:" thus hiding the Israelites from their enemies. "And the pillar of the cloud came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night." According to this, if the Lord comes in between His people and their enemies, the enemies must break through the Lord before they can get at His people. But they cannot break through Him. And if the Lord only give the enemies of His children an angry

look, He is certain to slay them. Read the 24th and 25th verses: "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians. And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.'" And we read in a subsequent verse that "the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the Red Sea." So that "there remained not so much as one of them." What a victory! And this victory was obtained for them by their protecting Lord. He prevailed over all their enemies. And as it was in God's providential protection of His ancient people Israel, so it is now in the spiritual experience of the children of God. They are protected from all their enemies by Jehovah Jesus. He is the Angel of the Lord which encampeth round about them that fear Him. The Gospel itself when preached has a twofold effect. St. Paul declares that "To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life" (II Cor. ii. 15, 16). This is effected by the Spirit of God, so that the Gospel is to one, salvation; and to another, destruction. You will have seen the protection of God's ancient people Israel. He has always protected His people, and He will continue to protect them all to the very end. Let us now turn to the 4th chapter of Isaiah and read the 5th and 6th verses: "The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion,"—Zion, the city of the Lord, the Church of the living God. Every assembly of believers is a branch of this one church. "The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence." All the glory which He puts into and upon the church as a whole, and every part thereof, He will gloriously defend or protect. "For upon all the glory shall be a defence." The Lord will defend and protect what He does for His people against all comers. Hence, in the next verse, He goes on to say that "there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain." We are here reminded of the Man Christ Jesus, who is the Hiding Place of His people. "A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. xxxii. 2). The Lord has always, and will always, protect His beloved children. The scorching heat which must have beat upon Israel would have seriously injured them had they not been protected by the cloud. "He spread a cloud over them for a covering" (Psalm cv. 39). And think of the scorching heat of God's wrath, even of the fiery law which must have fallen upon us had not the protecting cloud of the Lord Jesus Christ been spread over us for a covering. We must not lose sight of the fact that all Israel were "*under* the cloud, and were all baptized unto Moses *in* the cloud and in the sea" (I Cor. x. 1). Whilst this cloud was a protection to all Israel, so also is Christ a protection to all His spiritual Israel. This cloud would drop down rain upon Israel which would



revive and refresh them. So the Lord Jesus Christ is to His people a reviving and refreshing cloud. "The king's favour is as a cloud of the latter rain" (Prov. xvi. 15). Jesus is "like a cloud of dew in harvest" (Isa. xviii. 4). Lord, let some drops fall on me—even me!

The pillar of cloud and fire was also for *direction*. If this cloud stood still, the children of Israel must stand still; if it went backward, they must go backward; if it went forward, they must go forward. This is marvellous. But these are the dealings of God with His children. Let us read a few verses together, they will be better than any comment of mine. In the 9th chapter of Exodus, beginning at the 15th verse: "And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. So it was alway." Mark the words: "So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. At the commandment of the Lord the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents. And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the Lord, and journeyed not. And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the Lord they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the Lord they journeyed. And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed; whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed. Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed. At the commandment of the Lord they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the Lord they journeyed: they kept the charge of the Lord, at the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses." We must also read in connection with these verses a few from the 40th of Exodus. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was upon all the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys." I have read these portions because they bring before us so clearly and yet so simply the various movements of the directing and guiding cloud. Sometimes it lifts, and sometimes it rests. Israel cannot move a step if the cloud moves not. And Israel cannot stand still if the cloud moves.

How dependant they were in all their journeyings upon the pillar of cloud and fire. The Lord Jesus Christ is our directing cloud. He is in other words our Conductor—our Captain—our General—and our Leader. If He stands still, so must we. If He goes backward, so must we. If He moves forward, then we must take up our tents and follow Him. We read of some who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. But these are the redeemed of the Lord, and are faultless before the throne of God (Rev. xiv. 4, 5). It is the *backward* and not the forward movements which are so trying to the children of God. It seems strange that when Israel's journey lay to the north, that they should be sent to the south. That instead of turning to the left they are commanded to go to the right. "He brought them by a way that they knew not," and yet it was the right way. "He led them forth by the right way that they should go to the city of habitation." All the ways which we think wrong are generally God's right way, and all the ways which we think best, generally turn out to be the worst. The Lord is the best guide after all. Do you believe this in your prosperity and also in all your adversity? Do you believe that He knows the best way? The Lord will not let us go the way we please, but the way He pleases. Sometimes we are for going north, and, He says, you must go south. He testifies by mighty signs to the right way. He divides the sea. He brings water out of the rock, and rains manna from heaven. His eye is upon you. He bears you upon eagles' wings and lands you at the promised place. But the Lord's children have always been a rebellious people. They were in the time of Moses, and there is no improvement in them yet. Human nature is full of corruption. God does not try to cure corruption, He will destroy it, and when He does, we rejoice, and shall joy and rejoice exceedingly in the entire destruction of the corruption of our nature that that which He has given may live and abide in glory and immortality for evermore.

The pillar of cloud and fire was to direct them *at all times, by day and by night*. Some Christians like to travel always by day, with the sun gently shining upon them. They like to feel the loving-kindness of God, like David, when he said: "Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong." "I shall never be moved" (Psalm xxx. 6, 7). This is very pleasant. It is beautiful travelling by day. Christians will be prepared to sing in the daytime, "My soul doth magnify the Lord for He hath done great things for me." He will neither travel long nor far by day. *Night* will and must come to the child of God. It is by day and by night he travels. David knew this when he said: "Thou didst hide Thy Face, and I was troubled." There are dangers by day as well as by night. But the Lord's protection is for all times. The cloud is spread as a covering over them. The pillar of fire will be for protection by night. You know that many Christians travel by night. They are often troubled with spiritual depression, with doubts and fears. This is the night of a Christian man's experience. Yes, the night is, as the Psalmist says, the time when all the beasts of the forest do creep forth,—the old lion and the young lions then seek their prey. Satan, the roaring lion, has always been trying to devour the children of

God. He tried hard to devour Christ Himself. But he failed. The night is the time when the beasts of the forest attack the children of God. But they will never succeed. The wild beasts of the world seek to devour by night. They were all gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ; and, consequently, they will gather together against His people. But the Lord rose triumphant over all, and so will all His followers. If the children of God travel by night, and if they are passing through the forest of this world, let them remember the pillar of fire which is God's appointed light to guide them in the way wherein they should go. Read the text again. Who is this pillar of fire? The Lord Jesus Christ, says: "I am the Light of the world." "The path of the just one shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs iv. 18). This Light shines in a dark place. The light shines for the purpose of shewing us the way. And when we see and know the way, we find out that there is no more danger in travelling by night than there is by day. Christians have to learn this by experience. It is just as safe travelling by night as by day. The Lord undertakes our safety and so protects us in all the way. The pillar of fire was not only for light, but for *warmth* too. In the night of spiritual desertion, darkness, and trouble, how comforting a little *warmth* is. The pillar of fire can make our hearts burn within us. This is indeed turning night into day. Darkness and heaviness may continue for a night, but light and joy come in the morning.

He will be with us by night and by day *under all circumstances*. Why under all circumstances? Consider some of the circumstances of the Israelites. They were in Egypt. They were greatly oppressed, but the Lord delivered them. They were tried at the Red Sea, but the Lord led them through. They murmur and complain in the wilderness, but the Lord will not let them go back to Egypt. He chastized them often because they were rebellious and did not observe His laws. He gave them forty years to learn His ways and to know Him. They learnt that "man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He never forsook them. He was with them under all circumstances and in all the way. "Thou didst lead them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire." "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night; He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before them" (Exodus xiii. 21-22). The Lord never forsakes His people—often enough they forsake Him. The Lord Jehovah abides an everlasting light to His ransomed ones.

Before concluding, let us ask ourselves *why* the Lord dealt thus with His people. Think for a moment. And then read the 8th Chapter of Deuteronomy and the 2nd Verse: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no. And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might

make thee *know* that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." He then reminds them that their raiment did not wax old,—that their feet did not swell, these forty years. They were to consider in their heart, that as a man chastened his son, so the Lord their God chastened them. They were to keep His commandments, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him; for the Lord was bringing them into a good land, a land of refreshment, a land of abundance, and a land of blessing. The Lord taught them their dependence upon Him for everything. He made them feel their weakness when they contended with their enemies. Their entire journey was one of conflict and trial. They were disciplined to live by faith. By faith they forsook Egypt—by faith they passed through that great and terrible wilderness, and by faith they entered into Canaan. They possessed that good land not by their own might and power, but through mercy and grace. How descriptive is this of God's dealings with His children in all ages and in all places. He meets with them in Egyptian darkness, and delivers them. He passes them through seas of trouble. Often they murmur and rebel, but He never leaves them. He is with them by day and by night. Sleeping or waking, He watches over them for good. He makes them feel their own weakness and the strength of His Arm. He leads them on, and they taste the sweetness of His promise. "I will be with thee." Their trust is in Jehovah. And thus without any power or might of their own, they enter the heavenly Canaan prepared for them, through Mercy and Grace. Amen and Amen!

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# “THE BANNER DISPLAYED.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON

THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 3RD, 1878.

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*In the 60th Psalm, and at the 4th verse, you will read:—*

“THOU HAST GIVEN A BANNER TO THEM THAT FEAR THEE, THAT IT  
MAY BE DISPLAYED BECAUSE OF THE TRUTH.”

THIS Psalm is described in the preface as a “golden Psalm of David,” “Michtam of David,” a title which at once gives us the idea that the truths which the Psalm contains are precious and choice, that they are indeed Gospel truths. The Psalm is intended for instruction, it is said, “to teach.” The occasion of and the time when this Psalm was written are also mentioned. “When he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt twelve thousand.” An eminent critic upon the Psalms, the late Bishop Horsley, takes a different view of this Psalm, and thinks that it refers to the times of Jehoshaphat, and to some great event which took place during his reign. He says the Psalm consists of five parts. The first five verses are the first part, which he thinks would be sung by the High Priest. The second part consists of the sixth, seventh, and

eighth verses, which was a voice from the sanctuary. The third part, which is the king's prayer, is the ninth verse. The fourth part is the tenth and eleventh verses, where the semi-chorus takes up the intercession prayer; and the last verse forms the fifth part, which is the grand chorus: "Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies." I am inclined myself to take the Psalm as referring to the times of David, and to some great event which occurred during his reign. This I regard as the primary meaning and application of the Psalm. But this Psalm may be regarded as containing a prophecy, for in the first three verses it appears to me at least that the scattering of the Jews after the coming of our Lord, the destruction and overthrow of the Temple, the entire dissolution of Church and State, and the sad calamities which followed, are here foretold. What language could more aptly describe the state of the Jews and their miseries after the destruction of Jerusalem than this: "O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered us, Thou hast been displeased." "Thou hast made the earth to tremble, Thou hast broken it,—it shaketh,—Thou hast shewed Thy people hard things; Thou hast made us drink the wine of astonishment." Lord, heal—Lord, have mercy—turn Thyself to us again! Now after this description we have an encouraging one given in our text, and the fifth verse, which refers to our Lord Jesus Christ and to His followers. "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. That Thy beloved may be delivered; save with Thy right hand, and hear me." It is in this aspect we wish to look at our text. We must view it as fulfilled in Christ and His followers in all times. In order to bring this subject clearly before you let us consider it thus:

*First, the persons described—"them that fear Thee." Secondly, the blessing bestowed—"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee." And, thirdly, the end in view—"that it may be displayed because of the truth."*

*Let us now speak, in the first place, of the persons described in our text—"them that fear Thee." THEE, O God! THEE, O Lord! Not them that fear Satan, nor that fear man, nor that fear the world, but them that fear THEE. Little words are sometimes very significant, and speak powerfully. So it is in our text. But who are the persons that do fear God? We read of some who do not fear Him. Of such our text does not speak. This class is described by St. Paul, in the 3rd chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, when he says that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin: "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is *no fear of God* before their eyes" (verses 10-18). This I am quite aware is by some of the present day spoken of as antiquated and out of date; nevertheless, it is a fact*

stated in God's Book, and it is proved to be true by experience,—that a man who is unregenerated by the Spirit of God has no fear of God before his eyes. Of this class my text speaks not, but of those who fear God. I do not wish to dwell at any length upon the dark side, but rather to proceed at once to speak of those who have the fear of God in their hearts.

How do persons come by the fear of God? Is it something that they can put into themselves? or is it something that the minister can put into them? Is it a manufactured article of the creature? My beloved brethren, the fear of which I now speak is a new covenant-blessing, and is the gift of God wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost. In confirmation of this let me ask you to read the 32nd chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, beginning at the 38th verse: "And they shall be My people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may *fear Me* for ever." No man has this fear unless God puts it into him. I mean such a fear, mark you, as that of which my text speaks. It is God's fear. Hence, He says: "They shall fear Me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will *put My fear* in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." Now you see why a Christian man does not depart from his God. It is because God has put His fear into him. This word for fear, as it is used in the Old Testament Scriptures, and also in the New, is equivalent to "worship," or "service." Hence, our Lord quotes the Old Testament, and brings out this idea in the 4th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, when He says: "It is written, 'Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou *serve*'" (verse 10). Here He explains what is meant by the word "fear." It is "worship," "spiritual worship." And who are they that worship spiritually? It is only those who are spiritual persons. Our Lord says that they who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth, and that the Father seeks such to worship Him; and it is only such worship as this of which I am speaking which is acceptable in His sight (John iv. 23, 25). This is very exclusive, you say. Well, all real religion is exclusive. All believers, too, are exclusive persons when God has put his fear into them. They have not made their religion, nor can they get rid of it. We sometimes think that we have very little religion. I sometimes feel as if mine were dying out, and as if I shall have none left by-and-by. Well, my brethren, as to *my own* religion, the sooner I am rid of it the better, in order that the religion of God, which is spiritual fear in my heart, may be made manifest in holy worship and service. It is said that the fear of God is wisdom (Job xxviii. 28). "The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. i. 7). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm cx. 10). These are all quotations which you may read and meditate upon with profit. The fear of God is knowledge and wisdom to every believer.

Let me now point out to you one or two little things in connection with this fear of the Lord. Whoever has this fear of God in him is in

possession of a secret which the world knows nothing about. Turn to the 25th Psalm and read the 14th verse: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His covenant." What an unfolding of the covenant of grace takes place in the hearts of the children of God by the Holy Ghost. They have the secret, and they sometimes talk one to another about it. They may speak of it in the presence of the world, but the world will not understand them. Mere professors will not understand them, although they may listen, and with a nod give assent, as if they were saints. But they have no heart, no soul, and no feeling. They are not one in heart with the persons who are in possession of the secret. Read what is said in the Book of the Prophet Malachi, the 3rd chapter and the 16th and 17th verses: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." This is communion of saints. "And the Lord hearkened." The Lord hearkening to a brother in Christ, or to a sister in Christ. "The Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him." The Lord is His own secretary. He puts the names of His people into His book, and no one can put them out. He keeps an account of His children, of their groans, and their tears. He is not unmindful of the weakest of His children. If they cannot speak and yet can *think* upon His name they are not forgotten before the Lord. What blessed condescension and comfort to the weak ones of the flock. "Them that *thought* upon His name." Sweet words of comfort to my soul! Often, when I cannot speak of my Lord, and when I cannot "worship" Him as I would, yet, O Lord, my God, Thou knowest that my thoughts are towards Thee! "Them that *thought* upon His Name." "Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people," saith the Lord God of Israel. "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels"—My hid treasure—"and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Now you see what the Lord has done and will do for them that fear Him, and that think upon His Name. Read the 2nd and 3rd verses of the 4th chapter: "But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Frequently, it is now, that those who fear the Lord are trodden under foot of men. The time is coming when the wicked shall be as ashes under their feet, for the Lord shall make them ride triumphantly over all their enemies.

One or two words more before I leave this first part. Those that fear the Lord have very often dark and troublesome times. I do not mean with regard to the loss of this world's goods, for this is the least loss that a man can have, but I mean those spiritual trials, those doubts and fears which often arise in a man's soul when all is darkness within. Now, is there not a word of comfort spoken to such in God's Book? Turn to the 50th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah and read the 10th verse: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in *darkness*, and hath no



*light?*” Oh! what a state! No light in spiritual things,—unable to take a single step! What then? “Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God” (10th verse). What comfort! There is a resting place even for those who have no light, and who are walking in darkness. We read of those who were God’s servants, and whose religion was summed up in these words: “They feared the Lord.” It is said of Obadiah that he feared the Lord greatly from his youth (I Kings xviii. 12). It is a blessed thing to have religion put into the heart when young. Then I read of Job, that he “was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil” (Job i. 1). Jonah said: “I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land” (Jonah i. 9). We might multiply examples; but what we have said will suffice to comfort and encourage the children of God, and especially the weak ones amongst them, who have their dark and gloomy days. “Let them stay upon the Lord their God.” “All things come of Him.” “He taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, even those that hope in His mercy.” Let us then, at His feet, humbly bow, and say: “Lord, do with us as it seemeth good unto Thee.”

*We shall now proceed to consider our second head. “Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee.” This is the blessing bestowed.*

The word for banner is variously translated in the Scriptures. It is translated by the word “pole,” and by the word “ensign,” and “standard,” and also a “banner,” as in our text. In the 21st chapter of the Book of Numbers, and the 8th verse, it is translated “*a pole.*” “The Lord said unto Moses, ‘Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a *pole*: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.’” And “Moses made him a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole,” that everyone who looked upon it might live. Now look into the New Testament and you will see how the Lord Jesus Christ applies the type to Himself. Read the 3rd chapter of St. John’s Gospel: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Evidently, the Old and the New Testament agree. The pole and the serpent of brass prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And now He is to be lifted up in the preaching of the Gospel, that whosoever feels his need of a Saviour, and looks to Him, shall not die but live. Again, this word is translated “ensign.” I will give you two or three examples. Take the 11th chapter of Isaiah, and read the 10th verse: “And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an *ensign* or *banner* of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious.” You see that Jesus Christ is spoken of in this verse. Read the 12th verse: “And He shall set up an *ensign* for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” “And He will lift up an *ensign* to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and behold they shall come with speed swiftly” (Isa. v. 26). At the 22nd verse of the 49th chapter, we read: “Thus saith the Lord God, ‘Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up My

*standard* to the people.” “Standard” and “ensign” are the same word. “I will set up My *standard* to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.” And in the 62nd chapter: He shall “lift up a *standard*,—or an ensign,—for the people” (verse 10). Now, my brethren, I think you will at once see, by comparing one Scripture with another, that the banner spoken of in my text is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. “Jehovah Jesus is my *banner*” (Exodus xvii. 15). “Thou hast given a *banner* to them that fear Thee,” or, God has given His dear Son Jesus Christ to all them that love and fear Him.

What instruction there is in all this! A banner, ensign, or standard. Of what use is a banner? Soldiers know well the use of it. In the 51st chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah we read, that when the Lord was about to attack Babylon, He set up a standard which was a declaration of *war* against her (27th verse). When the Lord Jesus Christ is lifted up as the standard of His people it is a declaration of war against sin, the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The world is a very Babylon, and the corrupt heart is no better. The Lord lifts up the standard and declares war against every enemy, even unto death. “The Lord is a Man of War”; and the Church of God is “terrible as an army with banners” (Song vi. 4).

Again, a banner is a sign of *victory*. Look into the 50th chapter of Jeremiah and read the 2nd verse: “Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say ‘Babylon is taken.’” The standard is set up, and Babylon is conquered. Jesus Christ is our Standard or Banner set up on the walls of the spiritual Zion. We are made more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Shall we not say: “Thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Corinthians xv. 57).

Again, the banner is used for directing soldiers *where* to stand, and *when* to move, and *whom* to follow (Numbers ii. 2). Our banner tells us as Christian soldiers where to stand. “He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love” (Solomon’s Song ii. 4). Under the banner of a loving Saviour we stand and fight. “Stand in the Lord,” says St. Paul, “and in the power of His might:” fight, contend; the battle is sharp and severe, and the foe is powerful, but “Stand; and having done all, stand in the Lord” (Ephes. vi. 10-13). It is under this banner that the Christian man fights and conquers. *When* this banner moves, then let all the soldiers move. It is very much like the pillar of cloud and fire. When this banner goes forward as a sign of conquest then all is well with us, and we can sing one of the songs of Zion. But if we have to retreat under the banner, what then? We cannot sing one of the songs of Zion, for we are in trouble. We hang our harps upon the willows. How can we sing one of the Lord’s songs of victory in a strange land. A retreat may be necessary sometimes, but to the child of God it is never pleasant. Remember this great fact, that we can neither fight nor fly without the banner. We cannot move a step without Jesus. If the banner were taken away from us we



should be conquered. But there is this respecting the banner under which the people of God fight. It can never be taken away from them. It is planted on high, and out of danger; hence believers cannot be conquered. Now *whom* are they to follow? Only One we can follow, and He is our *Standard Bearer*. I wish you to look at the Song of Solomon, the 5th chapter and the 10th verse: "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the *chiefest* among ten thousand." But in the margin of your Bibles it is "*standard bearer*." Yes, He—the Lord Jesus Christ—is the chiefest, and the only Standard-Bearer, amongst the ten thousands of His spiritual Israel, and under Him, as their Head and Leader, they fight and conquer, and follow Him whithersoever He goeth.

The banner distinguishes *one company* from another. This banner distinguishes the regiment to which we belong. Hence, in the 2nd chapter of the Book of Numbers and the 2nd verse, it is said that each tribe had its own standard. The church of God here is a company. It is a separate and a holy company in Christ Jesus our Lord. Satan has his company and his banner; and his followers fight under it and for him. My brethren, to which company do we belong? How important the inquiry. Satan and his company. Christ and His company. These two companies are in deadly conflict (Rev. xii). Victory will finally be with the company of Jesus, Who is the Standard-Bearer of all the redeemed.

"Thou hast *given*." You cannot purchase this banner. I wish you to think of this. The Lord does not sell it. It is the bestowal of His free grace. Many of you possess it, but you did not buy it. Christ, from first to last, is a free gift. He is the gift provided in the eternal councils. He was the gift of God in the fulness of time; and He gives Himself to believers in regeneration by the Holy Ghost. And then it is that the child of God says:—"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (II Corinthians ix. 15). When we shall see Jesus as He is, in His completeness and perfection, then we shall glorify and praise Him as we ought. Beloved, has He given Himself to us? This is personal and practical. Solemnly, let me put the question. Has the Lord Jesus Christ given Himself to you? My soul, dost thou enjoy the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He yours? Can you say in the language of the wisest of men: "My Beloved is mine, and I am His"? Is it so? Some persons do not like practical sermons but doctrinal ones, others like practice but not doctrine. The real child of God likes both, but doctrine first and then practice. Some like all practice and no doctrine. Others like all doctrine and no practice. You must have sound doctrine first, and then sound practice will follow. This is having things the right side up. To put practice before doctrine is to put things the wrong side up. Carnal religion must perish, but the religion of God will abide for ever. "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth."

*We shall now proceed to consider our third point, which is the end in view:—"That it may be displayed because of the truth."* What do you intend by displaying and unfurling the banner? Is it not that the people of God may see it, follow it, and fight under it? If I understand

anything at all about this banner, and its being unfurled, it is the lifting up of Christ in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. What does Christ say? "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth:"—Well, what will He do?—"I will draw all men unto Me" (John xii. 32). And it is a three-fold drawing to Christ. God the Father draws us to Christ; Christ draws us to Himself; and the Holy Ghost draws us to Christ. If it were not for this three-fold cord which cannot be broken, no one would ever come to the Lord Jesus. Never! No! Never! I speak from what I know of the truth myself, that it requires a three-fold cord to draw me from self and from the world unto the Saviour. Now, to unfurl the banner is to preach Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. This is what St. Paul did when he preached Jesus. He exalted Him as the Head and Representative of the Church, which is the true unfurling of the banner, as revealed in the Scriptures. He preached Jesus in the glory of His person, in the fulness of His grace, in the excellency of His work in life and death, in resurrection, ascension, and session, as the only Saviour for perishing sinners. This is what I understand to be displaying and unfurling the banner. You may now enlarge upon this subject for yourselves. Having thus unfurled the banner a little we shall try to point out some of the mottoes which are upon it. "That it may be displayed because of the truth."

This banner is the banner of Truth—or the true banner. Well, the Lord Jesus Christ is Eternal Truth as He is God. He is also Truth substantially as He is the substance of all the types and of all the promises, for they are all proved to be yea and amen in Him. He is the true fountain of all grace to His people. Grace and truth dwell in Him in all fulness. He speaks thus of Himself: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John xiv. 6). "For this purpose came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John xviii. 37). The Father is the God of truth; the Saviour is the God of truth come down from heaven; and the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of truth who magnifies the Gospel of the Grace of God which is the word of truth in the salvation of sinners. The banner is to be displayed because of the truth. Let us now notice some of the *mottoes* upon the banner. They may not be without their use at the commencement of another year. I wish you all a very happy new year, I mean a spiritual and prosperous one in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now for some of the mottoes. The first is this. It is the last expression in the book of the Prophet Ezekiel: "JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH" (see the margin). What does it mean? "The Lord is there." We saw on the last occasion that the gracious presence of the Lord is the secret of success to His people. Moses said: "Suffer us not to go up hence, if Thy presence go not with us" (Exodus xxxiii. 15). The Lord is in the midst of His people. "He is there" in the city, in the Church of God. The Lord will be with His people according to His own promise, even unto the end of the world. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew xxviii. 20). This savours of the doctrine of final perseverance. It is not, however, the final perseverance of man, but the final perseverance of Christ in man. There

is a great difference. And this is the difference between those who are called (I was about to use two words which, perhaps, will offend some of you. The two words, names, or titles are) *Arminians* and *Calvinists*. The Arminians make the final perseverance of the saints to rest too much upon what the creature can *believe* and *do*. The Calvinists contend that it is the Lord who perseveres in the saints even unto the end; for which they would give God all the glory and all the honour. Lord reveal Thyself to us as our "Jehovah-shammah."

Let us notice another motto upon the banner of Truth. We read in the 22nd chapter of the book of Genesis, that God commanded Abraham to take and offer up his only son Isaac, whom he loved, upon a certain mountain. Abraham obeyed the command—and offered up Isaac—"accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a *figure*" (Hebrews xi. 17-19). In the whole of this transaction we see death, resurrection, and the doctrine of substitution. A ram was caught in the thicket by his horns and sacrificed instead of Isaac. Read the 14th verse: "Abraham called the name of that place 'JEHOVAH-JIREH': as it is said to this day, 'In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.'" "Jehovah-jireh." "The Lord will see," or "The Lord will provide." It takes a great deal of training to teach a man to understand this motto. But after all it is one of the mottoes which we discover in unfurling the banner: "the Lord will provide." Shall we not rather say: "The Lord has provided?" He has provided, from everlasting, the sacrificial substitute for sinners. He has provided the Divine Spirit to quicken them, and then to sustain them in grace. Provision will be supplied for all the way. The Lord will see to it. He has provided a kingdom into which all the redeemed shall enter. And then it shall be seen in the ancient mountains and in the everlasting hills what precious things the Lord has provided. What a charming motto, "JEHOVAH-JIREH."

Take another motto. It is in the 23rd chapter of the Book of Jeremiah, and part of the 6th verse: "JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU," "The Lord our Righteousness." How blessed to be able to realize this whilst we are unfurling the banner!—"The Lord my Righteousness." Who made Him my Righteousness? God hath made Him "unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians i. 30). We are "made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians v. 21). You see what the Lord Jesus Christ is to us. He is our Righteousness. Hence, He is called "JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU," "the Lord our Righteousness." And then in the 33rd chapter of the same book, the church is called "the Lord our Righteousness" (verse 16). Christ and His church are joined in an indissoluble union, and bear the same name. He is called "the Lord our Righteousness," and she is called "the Lord our Righteousness." Their name is "JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU."

There is another motto mentioned in the Book of Exodus, the 17th chapter, verse 15. The Amalekites were sworn enemies of the Lord's people. But the Lord will defend His people Israel. He will be "JEHOVAH-NISSI," "a Defence for His people against Amalek," from generation to generation. "The name of Amalek and the remembrance

of him will the Lord clean put out from under heaven." This is the end of the war between the Lord and His enemies. "The Lord is my banner," and will defend me against all the Amalekites of hell and of earth. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift a *standard* against him" (Isaiah lix. 19). The Lord is my "JEHOVAH-NISSI."

We see another motto upon the banner: it is "JEHOVAH-SHALOM." Read the 6th chapter of the Book of Judges, the 24th verse. When Gideon was called to go forth against the enemies of the Lord, he desired to know if the Lord would be favourable unto him. "And the Lord said unto him, 'Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die.' Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it JEHOVAH-SHALOM." "The Lord will send peace." And if the Lord do not send peace into our souls, no one else can. It is as we see the sacrifice consumed, and the fragrance thereof ascending to heaven, that peace is felt in our hearts. Lord send peace—peace among the nations of the earth—peace in our families—but, above all, peace in our souls, peace which passes all understanding, peace in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Peace. Peace, good Lord, send peace. Be Thou our "JEHOVAH-SHALOM."

Again, glance at another motto. It is this: "JEHOVAH-ROPHA:" that is, "The Lord is thy Healer" (Exodus xv. 26). This is beautifully brought out in the 8th chapter of Jeremiah, the 22nd verse: "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Yes, indeed, the *Healer* is the Lord Jesus Christ. But then we do not need a physician unless we are *sick*. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew ix. 12). You know the Lord's words. Well, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Healer to restore us. His precious Blood is the Balm of Gilead. When He appears in the power of the Spirit He brings healing to the soul; and then the soul returns thanks to God, saying, "Bless the Lord, O! my soul: and all that is within me bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O! my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm ciii. 1-3). Who is the great Restorer, the great Physician? It is Jesus our "JEHOVAH-ROPHA."

The last motto which I shall mention is this: "JEHOVAH-ROI." It is in the 23rd Psalm and the 1st verse: "The Lord is my Shepherd." He is the best Shepherd. What does a *good* Shepherd do for his sheep? Christ tells us. "The *good* Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" (John x. 11). Oh! beloved, if we be His sheep—He has given His life for us. He is also the *chief* Shepherd. "When the chief Shepherd shall appear" (I Peter v. 4) then all those who are His children shall receive crowns of glory which fade not away. "The Lord is my Shepherd." The *great* Shepherd is *mine*. Look at the little word *mine*. "Mine"!! The *one* Shepherd of Israel who feeds His Flock is *mine*. The *good* Shepherd, the *great* Shepherd, the *chief* Shepherd, is *mine*! I should like to turn you all into a Bible Class, and say, "My dear brother, or my dear sister, canst thou say, 'The Lord is *my* Shepherd'?" "JEHOVAH-ROI."



In the unfurling and displaying of the banner we have had a glimpse at some of the mottoes :—"JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH"—"The Lord is there." "JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU"—"The Lord our Righteousness." "JEHOVAH-NISSI"—"The Lord is my Banner and my Defence." "JEHOVAH-SHALOM"—"The Lord sends peace." "JEHOVAH-ROPHA"—"The Lord is my Healer, my Physician;" and "JEHOVAH-ROI"—"The Lord is my Shepherd." Read the mottoes as they unfold themselves to you one after another upon the banner of truth, and you will be compelled to exclaim, in the words of St. Paul, that "CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL." "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." "That Thy beloved"—the church—"may be delivered"—delivered from sin, from darkness, from trouble, from death, hell, and the grave. "Save with Thy right hand," and with Thine outstretched arm. Lord, Thou canst save and bring Thy people to the Kingdom which Thou hast prepared for them. Lord, our eyes are unto Thee. "Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man." Lord, we would join in full chorus of praise to Thee as the God of our salvation. Lord, we would sing: "Through God we have done valiantly, for He it is Who has trodden down all our enemies." Surely, this Psalm is rightly named—"A Golden Psalm." And now to God our Father, and to the Eternal Spirit, be ascribed all honour and praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord! AMEN, and AMEN!!

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## “THE BANNER.”

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*“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.”*

READER! do not hastily pass over this blessed verse. Surely there is to be discerned much of the mind of the Holy Ghost in it. Is not JESUS the Banner and Ensign which God has set up to His people? (Isaiah xi. 10). And doth not the Church rejoice when Jesus brings her into his banqueting house, and sets His banner of love over her? (Song ii. 4). Yes! Almighty God and Father! Thou hast indeed given a banner in Christ to all His people. Oh! for grace so to fear Thee, so to love Thee, so to live to Thee in Jesus, knowing that under His banner I am safe, and, like *Moses*, look unto Jesus as my altar, and call Him JEHOVAH-NISSI, the Lord is my banner (Exodus xvii. 15).

*“That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand, and hear me.”*

Jesus is the beloved of the Father, full of grace and truth. But it should seem that Christ had an eye in this prayer to the Church, which is His beloved, and in Him also the beloved of the Father. Reader! if you take the verse in this sense, and then connect with it what the Lord Jesus Christ said in the days of His flesh (John xvii. 23), I do not know a thought which can be awakened in the mind more blessed, more delightful, and full of glory! Cherish it, I pray you, for ever, and carry it about with you wherever you go, to help your mind on the unceasing love and praise of all the persons of the Godhead. Doth God the Father indeed love the Church of the Lord Jesus, even as He loveth Him?

*Dr. Hawker's Commentary.*

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# “THE ELECTION OF GRACE.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 7TH, 1878.

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*In the 11th Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and the latter part of the 5th Verse.*

### “THE ELECTION OF GRACE.”

THE Apostle opens this chapter by removing an objection which might be supposed to arise out of what he had said at the close of the preceding chapter. Read the last verse: “To Israel He saith, ‘All day long I have stretched forth My Hands unto a disobedient and gain-saying people.’” The Apostle then asks the following question, and answers it: “I say then, ‘Hath God cast away His people?’” He meets any such question or objection with a “God forbid.” He then proves that God’s people are not cast away. He instances himself: “For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” Paul was a Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; no foreign blood ran in his veins, and God had not cast Him away, but on the contrary, He had called him by His grace. “God hath not cast away His people which he foreknew.” A national rejection does not imply a spiritual rejection of His people. He then reminds them of a circumstance which occurred in the time of Elias. “Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.” Elias made a mistake in thinking that he was the only true follower of God in his day. Indeed the children of God frequently make mistakes, and upon no point more than the one to which the Apostle refers. How often it happens that the child of God is tossed hither and thither,

and finds no one that he can speak to about spiritual things! And then it is that he arrives at an erroneous conclusion like Elias, and says: "I am left alone." But what was the answer of God unto Elias? "I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." This was a large number in comparison. Elias said one; the Lord said seven thousand. The Lord knew His own, both where they were, and what they were doing, and how they would best manifest that grace which He had magnified upon them. The Apostle uses this as an argument to shew that whatever mistakes the children of God may make as to those who are His people, yet He knows them all, their number, and their end. There was a remnant reserved in the time of Elias of which he was ignorant until it pleased God to inform him. The Apostle reasoned that it was so even in his own day: "Even so then at this present time also"—as in the time of Elias—"there is a remnant"—the Lord's reserve, but then it is "according to the Election of Grace." There has always been a remnant upon the earth since man fell, and there always will be until the Lord Jesus Christ comes from heaven to receive the last elect vessel of mercy unto Himself. This is the seed which shall serve Him; and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. This is the Lord's generation which has been washed from its filthiness, and which is saved "according to the election of grace." In the verse which follows our text the Apostle is very careful to exclude all works in the election of a sinner to salvation. He magnifies Grace therein, but he cannot do with a mixture of grace and works. A *mixture* is the fashionable preaching of the present day; but a fashionable mixture cannot save a soul. Mixtures may please the world, carnal men, and formal professors, but such doses will never meet the necessities of the living family of the living God. St. Paul would not, and could not tolerate for a moment such "messes." With him, salvation must be either the result of grace or of works. Israel had sought it by works and failed. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for." Some, however, did obtain it. But how?. By grace, for it is said: "the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." It is not my intention this evening to review the dark side of the picture, but to speak to you upon a subject which is either brought before us, or at least suggested by the words of our text. I shall have to ask your careful consideration of what I say, and I hope I shall speak only in keeping with the oracles of truth.

*I shall throw my subject under three heads: First, that the doctrine of election runs through the entire Scriptures of God: this I shall show you by example and illustration. Secondly, that there is an election unto salvation, and to all the means thereof. And thirdly, that our election unto salvation, and to all the means thereof, is rooted in God's good pleasure, and is the result of His sovereign grace. "The election of grace."*

*Consider first, that the doctrine of election runs through the entire Scriptures of God. This I intend to show you by example and illustration. There is one passage of Scripture which I wish you to look at before I proceed, for it contains, to my mind, four important doctrines.*

It is in the 62nd chapter of Isaiah, the last verse: "And they shall call them, 'the holy people'"—this is election. "The redeemed of the Lord"—this is redemption. "And thou shalt be called, 'sought out'" —this is effectual calling by the Word and by the Spirit. "A city not forsaken"—this is final preservation. In this verse you will see the four doctrines named. The verse will serve as a little sermon for you to think over, and to reflect upon at another time.

I remember that about eleven years ago I preached a sermon upon the subject of election in my own church in Sheffield. My text, on that occasion, was that which is written in the 1st chapter of the 1st Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God" (verse 4). That sermon, to some, was offensive, and they resolved never to hear me again. I fancy that some of them have carried out their resolution, others have not. About four years ago I was walking in a public thoroughfare when a gentleman touched me on the shoulder, and said: "Do you remember me?" I said, "No." "Well," he said, "I used to attend your church, and I heard you preach the doctrines of grace, but I did not believe them. I had to go to the ends of the earth to learn the truth of them, and now, I can assure you, that I know something about them for myself." That gentleman I have never seen since; where he is, or whether living or dead, I know not. He may be in this church to-night for aught I know; and if so I shall have a word of comfort for him. It is just possible, beloved, that some of you who may hear what I say to-night may resolve in your own minds never to hear me again. But there is one thing I rejoice in, which is this, that if God has a purpose of grace towards any such, He will send His Word home at the right time, and make it not only the word of grace, but the word of life and of power to their souls! Amen!

Let us now proceed with the argument, to shew you that the doctrine of election runs through the entire Scriptures of God. Let it be understood that by election we understand one or more chosen by God out of many for any end He pleases. I know of no doctrine which is calculated to give more offence to those who are called professors, and specially great professors of religion; but this is of no consequence to me. If I find it to be a truth of God, whether it be for me or against me, I feel bound to state it. My argument is a very simple one. If we begin with our first parents, we find that a separation took place very soon. In the book of Genesis we read of Cain and Abel. Well, the election ran not in the eldest son, but in Abel. He was a worshipper of the true God, and offered his excellent sacrifice in faith. It cost him his life, it is true. He was the first martyr to true religion, and the first elect vessel of mercy, as far as we know, that ever entered into glory. When Abel was slain, God shewed that He had not chosen Cain, for He appointed another seed. In due time Seth is born, as you read in the latter part of the 4th chapter of the book of Genesis, and to him Enos. Then it was that men began to call upon the Name of the Lord, and to worship the true God. The election was to run in the family of Seth, and not in the family of Cain. In the 5th chapter of Genesis you have a list of the elect worthies, for it is the election of grace that is spoken

of there. In the time of Noah, he and his family, being "the election of grace," entered the Ark at God's command, and the door was shut by the Lord Himself, and they were saved. Noah had three sons, but one only is elected, whence the Saviour should spring. It is Shem; and it is from Shem that Abraham descends, who is in due time called to be "the father of the faithful." The promise to Abraham is that in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. Here is election. Then Abraham has two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. But the election runs not in the eldest son, but in Isaac, the son of promise. There appeared many difficulties in the way, but there is nothing too hard for the Lord. Isaac is the one chosen of God to be in the royal line. Isaac has two sons—and the Apostle is very clear and distinct upon this point—Jacob and Esau. Esau is the eldest, but he is not of "the election of grace." Jacob is the chosen one; but there was nothing in him why he should be preferred above Esau; but so it was, Jacob is God's chosen one (Romans ix. 11). Again, Jacob has twelve sons, and it is from one of these that the Saviour must come, it is not from the eldest, nor yet from the youngest, nor yet from that eminent servant of God, Joseph; but Judah is the chosen one, and in the fulness of time the Lord Jesus Christ appears as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." To pass on to the account of Jesse's eight sons. Seven of them passed before Samuel, but he said unto Jesse: "The Lord hath not chosen these." There was one, a ruddy youth, which had not passed before him, and he is sent for, and it turns out that the Lord had chosen him to be the great ancestor of our Saviour. The reason is given, "The Lord seeth not as man seeth" (I Sam. xvi). With David's "root and offspring" (Rev. xxii. 16) Jehovah made His covenant. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. I have exalted one chosen out of the people" (Psalm lxxxix. 3, 19). This is the elect one of whom the Prophet Isaiah sings: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles" (xlii. 1). We know that these words refer to Christ, the chosen head of the Church of God, when we compare them with what the Holy Ghost says in the 12th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. I have now shewn you election in succession which shall serve as the first part of my argument.

There was a *national* election. One nation elected or chosen out of many or all nations. It was Jacob and his seed, and they are spoken of thus in the 7th Chapter of Deuteronomy: "For thou art a holy people unto the Lord Thy God: the Lord thy God hath *chosen thee* to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people" (verses 6, 7). And what the Lord did for this people, as a nation, we are told in the verse that follows. And here, I may observe, by the way, that the word translated "chosen," is the same as "elect," or "election." "Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath *chosen thee* to be a peculiar people unto Himself above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Deu. xiv. 2).



Having chosen the nation in which the election of grace should run, we find also that the Lord chose also the very place where they should worship Him. In the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy this expression occurs no fewer than six times : "The place which the Lord shall choose to put His Name there." In this very place Israel must worship the Lord his God. "The Lord chose Zion for His dwelling place" (Psalm cxxxii. 13). Notice how this election is carried on. The nation is chosen, the place chosen, and then one particular family out of twelve is chosen to minister before the Lord. "The Levites are chosen out of all the tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord for ever and ever" (Deu. xviii. 5). Hence the Levites are told that they are to have no inheritance, for they are chosen by the Lord to minister in holy things before Him. This is the second part of my argument in favour of the doctrine of election.

I shall now shew you that God chooses persons for *different purposes* as He pleases. When He wished to deliver Israel at various times out of troubles, He has elect instruments for the purpose. They are called deliverers. Moses was chosen of the Lord to deliver Israel out of Egypt (Psalm cvi. 23.) Aaron was chosen to be High Priest (Psalm cv. 26). Joshua to lead them into Canaan; David to be a king; Cyrus, a man who knew not the Lord, to take Babylon (Isa. xlv. 1-5); Jeremiah to be a prophet (Jer. i. 5, 6); John the Baptist to be the forerunner of Christ (Luke iii. 4); and Paul to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts ix. 15). Our Lord chose twelve Apostles (John vi. 70). And our Lord Himself was God the Father's Elect One. And there are the "elect angels." When St. Paul wrote to Timothy, he said: "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels" (I Tim. v. 21). And who were elect angels but those who had never sinned, being preserved by and established in the electing grace of God. I have passed over some instances of election, but I scarcely think it is necessary for me to give you any more examples and illustrations in confirmation of our first statement, "That the doctrine of election runs through the entire Scriptures of God."

There is yet one thing that I must mention before I leave this first head, and it is this. I have taken some trouble to examine the original words. You may think that this is of but little importance, and perhaps it is not worth the trouble I have taken. The original word for elect, election, chose, and chosen, occurs no fewer than one hundred and fifty-seven times in the Old Testament. And the original word for elect, election, chose, and chosen, occurs in the New Testament fifty or fifty-one times. Thus you have the very word, which is so despised by some, and spoken against by others, occurring, as uttered by the mouth of God, no fewer than two hundred and seven times. He would, indeed, be a bold man who would say that there is no doctrine of election running through the Scriptures. And he would, indeed, be an ignorant man who would say that if there be the doctrine of election in the Scriptures that it is according to the works of men. I find that those persons who are opposed to God's election will admit an election of

their own. They are full of conceit about their own power and will, and speak as if God could do nothing without their permission. They are gods to themselves. May the God of Hosts smite them to the ground, and make them lie in dust and ashes before Him crying for mercy! Then they will understand what it is for the Lord alone to be exalted in the salvation of His people.

*I shall now proceed to consider, in the Second place, that there is an election unto salvation, and to all the means thereof.* Here I shall have to point you carefully to the Scriptures. Read the 2nd Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, the 2nd chapter and the 13th verse: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto He called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." You will see from these words that if I gave you no other Scripture you have the truth of the proposition established, that there is an election unto salvation, and to all the means thereof. Salvation is the end of election, and the means are "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The truth is the Gospel of God, and you believe it by the power of the Holy Ghost; and you are called effectually by the same Spirit to the obtaining of that glory which is in and through Christ Jesus. The Apostle had said in the Epistle which goes before this: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thessalonians v. 9). God's appointment is the foundation of salvation, the end of all is His own glory, the means which bind these together from first to last are in Christ Jesus. St. Peter says: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (I Peter i. 2). There are two or three doctrines here stated. First, election, this is the Father's work. Then sanctification by the Spirit, which is the third person's work. And then they are brought "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." They are made partakers of His obedience for righteousness, and of His blood for cleansing, and thus they stand complete before God in Christ Jesus. I think you will see that there is an election unto salvation, and to all the means thereof.

There is a marked difference between some who preach and myself upon this particular point. Some believe that we are elected because God fore-saw that we would believe, and repent, and obey the gospel. This is not my idea. Mine stands the other way. By election on the part of our God—we are elected unto glory, unto salvation, unto eternal life, unto the blood of sprinkling, unto regeneration by the Holy Ghost, unto repentance and unto faith in Him, unto obedience, and unto every good word and work,—thus tracing everything with which the child of God is blessed withal to its proper source. "The eternal covenant ordered in all things, and sure, which is all my salvation, and all my desire" (II Samuel xxiii. 5). The difference between me and those who disagree with me may be expressed by two little words, "*to*" and "*for*." I contend that election is *to* life and *to* grace here upon



earth, and to salvation and to eternal glory hereafter. My opponents contend that God elected us *for* our faith, *for* our repentance, and *for* our perseverance in grace to glory. As to which of the two views is most in keeping with God's Word, judge ye. Election to everything magnifies God's grace. Election *for* foreseen obedience magnifies fallen humanity above that, which I can admit with an open Bible in my hands.

This election is both a *blessed* and an *eternal* election. When I speak of its being an eternal election, I mean that God the Father chose His people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. As eternal is the election of the children of God as Christ Himself, Who is their Elect Head. If I could put it stronger I would do so. Christ is the Head of all His spiritual seed, and His members are all one in Him, and having had their eternal standing given them in Him before the foundation of the world they are indeed the blessed of the Lord. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." All the blessings that you and I enjoy in spiritual and eternal things have been made over to us in our Head, and have come down to us as members of His body, so that whatever we have is not our own, except so far as we are one with Christ, and Christ with us. Read the 65th Psalm, and the 4th verse: "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts: We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy House, even of Thy holy Temple." I look upon this verse, in the first place, as referring to our Lord Jesus Christ; and in the second place to all His family, who have approached and do approach God in Him. We have been blessed in Christ, and are still blessed in Him. We shall abide in His courts for ever, and we shall be satisfied with His abounding goodness which flows from on high into our earthen vessels. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance" (Psalm xxxiii. 12). "Happy is the people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord" (Psalm cxliv. 15).

There is another feature connected with this subject which I wish you to notice. This election is a *personal* one, a *particular* and *personal* one. I am always fond of personal and particular things in religion. And now allow me to shew you what I mean by election being particular and personal. It means in other words, that the Lord has not only chosen His sheep but that He knows them all by name. The Lord knew Adam by name. He called him and said: "Adam, where art thou?" And, I think, that he (though I cannot give you much Scripture for it) has gone to heaven. God called Abram by name when He told him to leave the country of the Chaldees and go into the land of Canaan. And again, when he was offering up his son Isaac. "Abraham! Abraham!" stay thine hand. The Lord spoke to Moses by name on Mount Horeb: "Moses! Moses! the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Afterwards, He said of him: "Moses, I have known by name" (Exodus xxxiii. 12). He knew David by name. The Lord called Elijah by name. "What doest thou

here Elijah?" The Lord has a book in which all the names of His children are written. And only those whose names are written in this Book will enter into glory. We find that all the rest are kept out of the city, and only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of life enter there into (Revelation xx. 15). The names of all the elect are known to the Lord. "In Thy Book all my members were written when as yet there were none of them" (Psalm cxxxix. 16). This is Christ speaking of His members as being written in His Father's book from everlasting. And then in the fulness of time they come into existence and serve the Lord their God. When our Lord appeared upon the earth, "He called His own sheep by name"—Matthew, Thomas, Nathaniel, Peter, or Paul. "My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John x. 3, 27). Now when we speak of any one by name, we mean something distinctive, personal, and particular. And this is the truth which God sets before us in His blessed Book. When we think of this and reflect for a moment that God cares for each one of His children, that He knows all their groans, their sighs, and their sobs, and that in due time He heals their wounds, and drives away their fears. Hidden indeed they may be to the world, but known and cared for by Him. What comfort and consolation to the tried and afflicted ones of the Lord's family. Their names like Clement and others are all in the book of life; therefore, let them rejoice in the Lord (Phil. iv, 3, 4).

Before I leave my second head I beg to observe that I meet with many who object to those truths which I have ventured to state to you. There may be some such objectors present this evening. Some of my clerical brethren think it very desirable to caution me at times, and advise me not to be so strong in preaching certain doctrines. They think that these doctrines are very dangerous and tend to make persons indifferent and careless about religion, and how they live. Their counsel may be well intended, but I am not an apt scholar. I shall ask you to consider some of the utterances of our Church. There may be some present who have never heard the articles of the Church of England. And I can assure you that I have not said a single thing to-night which the Church of England does not teach. Every clergyman has declared, upon oath, that he holds and receives the same doctrines that I do. Perhaps I cannot do better than read some statements from the prayer book, and then you can judge for yourselves. I shall first read from the 17th Article: "Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God be called according to God's purpose by His Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting

felicity." And in the next part of the Article we are told that these doctrines are of unspeakable comfort and consolation to the people of God. And, if so, why should they not hear them? But read on: "As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal Salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God; so, for *curious* and *carnal persons*, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation." Now, it is the latter part of this article which I have read, which is generally advanced as a reason for keeping back those truths which I have preached to you this evening. Is it a fact that because curious and carnal persons lacking the Spirit of God are led by Satan or thrust by him into wretchlessness of unclean living, therefore the children of God are to be deprived of the comforts and consolations of the pure Gospel of the Grace of God? It is not the doctrines of grace which make men live carelessly and indifferently, but it is the want of them. During the last 25 years I have carefully observed both ministers and congregations, and also particular members of congregations. And the conclusion at which I have arrived is this:—that there has been a great deal of profession; that pious appearances and gigantic swindles have too frequently gone together; that deeds have been done under the cloak of Christianity which the outlying world would be ashamed of. These things have happened in congregations which never heard the doctrines which you have heard this evening. But I do not blame the sort of Christianity which they have heard for their misconduct. It is a worthless Christianity, which does not teach persons to do that which is just and right between man and man. Persons generally measure christianity by the conduct of individuals instead of measuring the conduct of individuals by christianity. Those who know what real religion is in their own souls, are humble and veil their faces before God, crying: "Unclean! unclean!" But every clergyman of the Church of England is pledged to preach the doctrines of grace. When he baptizes a person he treats him as one of the elect, and prays "that he may remain in the number of the faithful and elect people of God." And in the Catechism every child is taught to believe in "God the Holy Ghost Who sanctifieth all the elect people of God." When a clergyman is ordained he is exhorted "to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world." And when he stands by the grave of the dead, he prays: "that it may please Thee, of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom." If a clergyman of the Church of England does not set forth these doctrines faithfully

and fully, he is keeping back that which is consoling and comforting to the Church of God. And in the public Services of the Church the congregation pray to God "to make His chosen people joyful." I will conclude this part with one of the collects used in our Church: "O Almighty God, who hath knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of Thy Son Christ our Lord; grant us grace so to follow the blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

*I shall now hastily shew you in the third place that our election to salvation and to all the means thereof, is rooted in God's good pleasure, and is the result of His sovereign grace.* That election is rooted in God's good pleasure. What scriptures can we refer to? I might take one out of the 46th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, where we read that God's purpose or counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure (verse 10). Compare this with St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians where it is said that God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ" (verses 11 and 12). But when we look to the 9th chapter of this Epistle to the Romans, and read the 11th verse, the question is settled. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth." This is God's good pleasure: "It was said unto her, 'The elder shall serve the younger' as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?"—"Yes." I have heard many say that God would be unjust to act in such a way. But what says the Apostle? "God forbid." No! God hath a right to do as He pleases with His own. Then for the comfort and consolation of His people. "He saith to Moses, 'I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.'" And if He will, who shall hinder Him? "Who hath resisted His will?" Corrupt nature will do its best to resist His will until overwhelmed by the power of Divine grace. Man has to be made willing in the day of God's power, and when this takes place he is brought into the obedience of Christ. Election to salvation is rooted in God's good pleasure. "The Lord taketh pleasure in His people." He has appointed our end "according to the good pleasure of His will." "He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure." "And He gives us the kingdom according to His good pleasure."

Election to salvation is the result of grace when you consider the *objects* of it. Read the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, the 1st chapter and the 26th verse: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." There is a peculiarity about this word "chosen." In the original it is in the middle voice, which notes that there is no cause outside of God Himself for His having chosen anyone to salvation.



Now, read on : " And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." And why? "That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : that, according as it is written, ' He that glorieth, let Him glory in the Lord.'" St. James says much the same thing in his 2nd chapter : " God has chosen the poor of this world," not because they were poor, nor because they were " rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love Him," but because He had a favour unto them in Christ Jesus. Our Lord informs us that He chose His disciples : " Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you," and consequently the world will hate you (John xv. 16, 19).

In the verse which follows our text, the Apostle declares that election to salvation is either the result of grace or of works. If it be of grace, it cannot be of works, and if it be of works it cannot be of grace. Election is not the result of works and grace. It is the result of either the one or the other. He settles it to be of grace, and that " the election hath obtained it." I intended quoting a portion of a hymn bearing upon this subject, but I forbear because of the time.

Before I conclude I wish to throw out a few words in the way of *evidences*. Some of you may have thought my sermon very dry. Well, I have not been preaching to feelings, for our feelings are unsafe guides and very changeable. I have been addressing myself to the enlightened understandings of the children of God. For the comfort of believers take three evidences from Micah, the 6th chapter and the 8th verse : " What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." To do justly, like Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and Job, who were first made just and righteous in Christ, and then acted justly as the result. " And to love mercy." And why? Because they have been made sensible partakers of God's sure mercies, and now desire to be merciful to others. " And to walk humbly with thy God." He walks because of the spiritual life which is in him. He walks in Christ the way, and according to the rule of God's word. He is a humble soul, and so walks humbly before God. He is like a little child, he cries for help and for guidance. Lord hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe. Keep me, and preserve me and then I shall continue to the end. I would ask you to examine a few verses in the New Testament (II Peter i. 4-11). The Apostle is speaking of those in the 4th verse, who have been made " partakers of the divine nature," that is, of the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost dwells in believers. What graces have they? They have faith, and faith is one of the first graces of the spirit to show itself. And then follows a number of graces. It is an addition sum : " Add to faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." What does the Apostle say about these things as evidences : " If these things be in you, and abound in you

through the power of the Holy Ghost." I do not know how it is with you in your own souls, and I am no priest to try you, but to declare unto you the fruits of the spirit as they are wrought in the hearts of believers. Let us read the words carefully: "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind." If this be spoken of a believer, it is of one in whom the graces of the spirit are not very manifest. "He cannot see afar off." He cannot see the kingdom of heaven and the glories laid up in Christ. Being comparatively blind, he sees and knows little of experimental religion. "He forgets that he has been purged from his old sins by the blood of Christ." But if this 9th verse be spoken of an unregenerate person, then we are bold to affirm that he sees and knows not the things which be of the Spirit of God, for they are spiritually discerned. The Apostle counsels his brethren to diligence. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure,"—not sure to God, for He knows all about everyone whom He has chosen,—but you are to "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" to yourselves and to others. In other words, see if you possess the evidences, and lively exercise of the fruits of the spirit. "For if ye do these things ye shall never fall." You shall never fall out of the covenant of grace, nor out of the hands of God, nor out of the love of Christ: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly," like a ship in full sail, "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." My beloved brethren, consider these things as God may enable you. And may He send His Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may be guided aright into the glorious truths of His glorious Gospel; and unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be all honour and praise both now and for evermore. Amen

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# “ETERNAL REDEMPTION.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 7TH, 1878.

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*The 9th Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the latter part  
of the 12th Verse.*

“HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION.”

THE superiority of Christ in this Epistle appears on every page. He is superior to all the prophets; to all the priests; and to all the deliverers, or saviours, who were raised up from time to time, under the old dispensation. This superiority appears in the opening of the first chapter. God had spoken by the prophets unto the saints of old; but, in the last times, He spoke by His Son Jesus Christ. In the same chapter you read that Christ is above the angels; for when He cometh into the world all the angels of God have to worship Him; that He is above, and more enduring than creation; for when the heavens shall have been rolled together, pass away and perish, yet the Son of God “remaineth” the same for ever and ever. The superiority of the Gospel, as revealed by Christ Jesus, is evident. Hence, if the Old Testament prophets claimed obedience to their message, how much more shall the Son of God claim obedience from those who hear His message.

We are to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard spoken by Him, lest at any time we should let them slip. In the opening of the third chapter Moses is described as a faithful servant in all his house. But Christ's superiority appears in this, that He is a Son over His own house. In the fourth chapter you read of several rests, the rest of creation, and the rest of Canaan into which Joshua led the people of Israel, but this latter rest was only a temporal one. Jesus the Son of God introduces His people to a rest which remains and abides for ever. Here is His superiority. And His superiority over the priests appears in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters. Aaron was a priest appointed and anointed of God, yet he did not abide for ever, nor did the Levitical priesthood. But another Priest arises: it is Jesus, Who is to abide a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. His Sacrifice, like His Priesthood, is superior to all the sacrifices which had been offered before. Jewish sacrifices could never take away sin, but the Sacrifice of Christ has put away sin once and for ever. Here is superiority. The superiority of the Covenant of Grace as it is administered under the gospel dispensation appears from a contrast in the eighth chapter of this Epistle. The covenant which God made with Israel when he led them out of Egypt, consisted chiefly in externals or outward ordinances. The Apostle tells us that the new covenant consisted in this, that "the Lord would put His laws into their minds, and write them upon their hearts." The new covenant made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. The weakness and inferiority of the former covenant are manifest when contrasted with the power and superiority of the latter. When we look into this ninth chapter we find that the ordinances connected with the Tabernacle were external and temporary, and could never reach the consciences of those that did the services. They were only "imposed upon them until the time of reformation." Read the tenth verse. Then in the eleventh and twelfth verses we read of the superiority of Christ. "But Christ being come a High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His Own Blood he entered in once into the Holy Place, having" found a ransom, He completed that work which was given him to do; He "obtained eternal redemption." I think from what I have already said, you will see that there is a superiority in Christ and His work, over every person that preceded Him, and over every work that had been done before His appearing upon the earth.

The subject which I wish to bring before you this evening may not be out of place considering my address to you on the last occasion. You will remember that my subject was "The election of grace." This evening it is to be "*Eternal Redemption.*" You will have to bear in mind a few points whilst considering this subject. The very word redemption implies that there has been a forfeiture. What then has been forfeited? And when was it forfeited? If we go back to the third Chapter of the Book of Genesis we shall read an account of the forfeiture, and how it was brought about. The Church of God by one

act of disobedience forfeited everything. She was mortgaged heavily. She was pledged or pawned. She was in bondage to pay that which she had no power to pay. She could not redeem or ransom herself. This was impossible, and if there were no such subject as the one which I have to speak of to-night, she must, as far as we can see, have remained in a lost and ruined condition for ever. Having made these preliminary remarks I shall proceed to open up our text thus :—

*First, the Redeemer; who is the Redeemer? Secondly, the redeemed; who are they? Thirdly, the Redemption; what is it? And, Fourthly, the excellency of this Redemption, "Eternal." "Having obtained eternal redemption."*

*First, the Redeemer,*—let us examine the word. A redeemer—what is implied? It is not every person that can be a redeemer. To be a redeemer implies that the person has an original right in the property. It implies also, according to the Scriptural idea of a redeemer, that he must be a near kinsman. This is the very meaning of the word redeemer, a near kinsman. In confirmation of what I say, read the 25th chapter of the book of Leviticus and the 25th verse: "If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold." The near kinsman is the Redeemer. This is still further beautifully brought out in the 3rd and 4th chapters of the book of Ruth. When Boaz, the near kinsman, was about to become a redeemer, he said to Ruth: "And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman; howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I." If the nearer kinsman did not perform his part as such then Boaz would. We read that Boaz said to the near kinsman, "I thought to advertise thee, saying, buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee." "And he said, 'I will redeem it.'" Boaz became redeemer on the ground of his being a near kinsman. This is the idea which I wish to impress upon your minds, that the Redeemer of the Church of God is a near kinsman; and that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are His brethren. They are the blood and flesh relations of the Son of God manifest in the flesh. We read in the 2nd chapter of this Epistle, the 14th and 15th verses: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same: that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." Here is our Redeemer. Here is our Near Kinsman;—blood of our blood,—bone of our bone,—and flesh of our flesh; our Elder Brother redeeming us from death and from the power of death, delivering us from the bondage of sin and Satan into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Near Kinsman who has accomplished all. It was for this very purpose that He was sent into the world. Being the Near Kinsman, set up from everlasting in the councils of old, and proclaimed in the Old Testament both by patriarch and prophet, He appeared in

the fulness of time : " God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law (of redemption) that we might receive the adoption of sons " (Galatians iv. 4, 5). They were adopted by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and a revelation of the same is made unto them by the Holy Ghost in due time. Again let us read a portion of the 53rd chapter of the book of the Prophet Isaiah, the 6th verse : " All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned everyone to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on Him,"—Him, the Near Kinsman ; the Brother born for adversity,—“ the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of *us* all.” The Father's dealings with the Near Kinsman are described in the 10th and following verses : " It pleased the Lord to bruise Him ; He hath put Him to grief : when Thou shalt make His Soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand," in the Hand of Jesus. " He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied : by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many,"—or the many ; " for He shall bear their iniquities," as their Redeemer. " Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong : because He hath poured out His soul unto death : and He was numbered with the transgressors ; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Here you have the account of the Redeemer, and of the Redeemer's work, and how he accomplished it. He was a suitable person, being God and Man. He possessed all the necessary power to undertake the work, and all the necessary wisdom and knowledge to guide it to its proper end. God and man are satisfied with the work of the Near Kinsman. We have indeed an almighty and sufficient Redeemer. He is an all wise and all faithful Redeemer. In His hands the property, the Church of God, is not only redeemed, but everlastingly secure from being forfeited again. All praise to our Kinsman, our Redeemer and Saviour. I have now said enough on this first point to give you an idea of what is implied in being a Redeemer.

*Let us look in the Second place at the Redeemed. Who are they?* This is the property. I hope you will watch me very closely, and test what I say by the Word of God. Bring your Bibles always, for this is a Bible Church, and let us have Bible readings together. You may rely upon it that purely Bible sermons are the best after all. It is the Word of God read and expounded which the Holy Ghost honours to the enlightening of the understanding and to the saving of the soul.

Now about this property. The redeemed : Who are they ? Well let us see how they are described in the Scriptures. They are declared to be the gift of the Father to the Son. In the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel and the 6th verse : " Thine they were," says Christ, " And Thou gavest them Me." " All that the Father giveth me." You see that they are the gift of God to Christ. But let us proceed further. They are described also as " sheep." In the 10th chapter of the same Gospel it is said, that Christ is the Good Shepherd. " I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold ; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice ; and there



shall be one fold, and One Shepherd" (verses 15, 16). Thus, they are not only the gift of God to Christ; but they are sheep for whom Christ has laid down His life. They are the flock of God. "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (I Peter v. 2). "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which Christ hath purchased with His Own Blood" (Acts xx. 28). They are described also as the Lord's portion. "The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance" (Deuteronomy xxxii. 9). The Lord's portion consists of "the saints that are in the earth." In the 16th Psalm we read: "My goodness," says Christ, "extendeth not to Thee." The goodness of Christ added nothing to Jehovah Father. "But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight" (verse 3). These excellent ones are "scattered abroad"; this property is all over the world. This property is the "Body of Christ" (Collosians i. 18). "The children of God which are to be gathered together in One," even in Christ (John ii. 52). This is Christ's property, "The Election of Grace." Given by the Father to Christ, and redeemed with His own most precious blood. This property is valuable, excellent, and glorious. This property we find further described at the commencement of almost every Epistle. Take up St. Paul's: "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints" (Romans i. 7). "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (I Corinthians i. 2). "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse" (Collosians i. 2). "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians i. 1). These saints are the Church of Jesus Christ. They are property which belongs to Him. It is the whole Church of God for which the Lord laid down His life. "The Lord hath redeemed these from the hand of the enemy, and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south" (Psalm cvii. 3). "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isaiah xxxv. 10).

A question might here be raised by some inquiring persons. It might be said, tell us something about the *number* of these redeemed ones. Who are they? This question we have tried to answer by giving you a description of them. As to the number of the redeemed you shall have my answer in the words of Scripture. There is a fixed number, and the number is known to Jehovah though not to me. I will give you some account of this number. I wish to be very careful about what I say upon this point, because many object to my plain and homely statements. But if I can give a Scriptural answer, I can afford to leave my opponents to do battle with the Scriptures. The Word of the Lord is able to defend itself. I desire to be hid in its shadow. In the 5th chapter of the book of Revelation and at the 9th and 10th verses you read: "And they sing a new song, saying, 'Thou



art worthy to take the Book, and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.' " Notice the words which I have read. Whence redeemed. They are redeemed out of all the nations upon the earth. But it does not say that all the nations of the earth are redeemed, but some out of every nation. It is the *some* who are redeemed "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," unto God. And these are they who shall make up that great number which no man can number. In the 7th chapter of Revelation and at the 9th verse, you read: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb." "No man could number" them. I do not pretend to do so, but God can number this vast multitude, and does number it. God has always known the number of the redeemed, and has put them all into Christ, to be preserved in Him. And these redeemed ones are all known to Christ Who laid down His Life for them. Not one will be forgotten by Him of that number redeemed out "of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues." We read that they all "stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: and cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God Who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.'" You see that the redeemed of the Lord when they assemble around the throne of God in heaven ascribe not their salvation to themselves, nor to their faith, nor to their prayers, nor to their doings, but they cry with a loud voice "Salvation to our God Who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, 'Amen: blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.'" Now, beloved, I think you will understand something about the number of the redeemed. It may be said, that this is putting a limit to the number. Very well, if it be, I am not to be blamed for it. I put no limit to the number, although I am often told that I do. God has put the limit. And who dare reply against Him. "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" (Romans ix. 20). Has not God a right to do what He will with His own? "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. And He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest Thou?" (Daniel iv. 35). If some of you have stumbled at what is called limited redemption, or particular redemption, you have stumbled at what God has done, and at what we find recorded in the Word of God. We find no such figment in the Holy Scriptures as universal redemption—except it be the universal redemption of the sheep, the universal redemption of the Body of Christ, the universal redemption of all the elect family, the Church of

God. The election of grace is co-extensive with the redeemed of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with those who either have been called, or are being called, or shall hereafter be called by the Holy Ghost out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel of the grace of God. I shall now proceed to consider our next point.

*Thirdly. The Redemption. What is it?* You must bear in mind that redemption is not to be confounded with some other doctrines which are recorded in the Scriptures. We have reconciliation by the death of Christ, but this is not redemption. We have justification by the Blood of Christ, but this is not redemption. We have peace through the Blood of the Cross, but this is not redemption. We have forgiveness of sins through Christ, but this is not redemption. I might mention a number of doctrines which are clearly revealed in God's Book, and which are most important truths, but they are not redemption. I would say that they are accompaniments of redemption, and that they form parts of the one *great whole—Redemption*. Indeed, the word redemption covers more than all the parts which we have mentioned. It is a very comprehensive term, and as such, we shall consider it. It is frequently synonymous with salvation. The resurrection of the body is called "the redemption of the body" (Romans viii. 23), and "the day of redemption" unto which all believers are sealed by the Holy Ghost (Ephesians iv. 30).

Redemption is described in the Scriptures as being effected both by *power*, and also by *price*. Both ideas are needed to set forth the perfect work of redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ. When we speak of redemption by *power* we mean a great deliverance wrought by God. When He redeemed Israel out of Egypt, He did so with an outstretched arm (Exodus vi. 6), and in the 7th chapter of Deuteronomy and at the 8th verse it is written: "that the Lord hath brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen." Again, "The Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm" (Deuteronomy xxvi. 8). Thus they were redeemed by power out of the house of bondage. In connection with this redemption there was the shedding of blood and the sprinkling of blood upon the door-posts, hence the destroying angel passed over all the houses of the children of Israel. They were all safely preserved, because of the sprinkled blood. The power of God was manifested in delivering them from Pharaoh, and in bringing them up out of the land of Egypt. The blood must be sprinkled upon the door-posts of the sinner's heart, and the divine power of the Spirit must deliver him from the bondage of the law, of sin, of Satan, and of death. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans viii. 2). This is a powerful spiritual deliverance. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians v. 1.) We may have a word to say, before we conclude, about the *extent* of redemption by power.

There is redemption also by *price*. Hence St. Paul says: "Ye are bought with a price" (I Corinthians vi. 20; vii. 23). Who "are bought with a price"? Is it everybody? No. "Ye are"—speaking of the

children of God. And what is the price that has been paid for them? St. Peter tells us plainly what the price is. "Ye are redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation," although there was a redemption of this sort under the old dispensation, but it is not with such perishable things as these that we are redeemed, "but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (I Peter i. 18-20). If anyone should ask me the price of redemption, my answer would be, the precious Blood of Jesus! The precious Blood of the Lamb of God. This is the price paid for the redemption of the soul which goes to heaven. Never forget redemption by price. The Blood of Christ, the death of Christ, the sufferings of Christ on the accursed tree, all that He did and suffered in life and in death, God has accepted as the redemption price of a perishing sinner.

The redemption of the soul is also described as being a *precious* redemption. The Psalmist speaks of this, in keeping with St. Peter. Read the 49th Psalm, the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches: none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." "None of them" can redeem a soul with his wealth. What can wealth do for us? You see what it cannot do. Money, whilst we are here below, often answers many ends. We can make friends by means of money, but whether such friends are always worth having it is not for me to say. Solomon said, "Money is a defence," and that "money answereth all things" (Ecclesiastes vii. 12; x. 19). Solomon was a wise man, but money could not redeem and save a soul. Possibly Solomon meant that money which is current in the courts of heaven, which is the Blood of Christ; and if so, we can indeed say that this money is a defence and answers all things. The precious and rich Blood of Christ is the price which ransoms a man "that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption, for the redemption of the soul is *precious*, and it ceaseth for ever." A precious Christ has said, "It is finished." Precious is the redemption of the soul, because redeemed with precious Blood. This precious soul is made partaker of precious faith, which looks to a precious Christ. Precious Blood has done what worlds of wealth could never do. It has redeemed precious souls unto God, and there is no need of any further redemption price. It must cease for ever, Christ having obtained "eternal redemption."

The redemption of Christ is a *full* and *complete* redemption. Read the 130th Psalm, the 7th and 8th verses: "Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is *plenteous* redemption." That is, in other words, we have a full and complete redemption in Christ Jesus, as the next verse goes to show. "And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." This is just what we want: a full and complete redemption from all our iniquities, transgressions, and sins. And such a redemption we have in Him who is made unto us "Redemption."

This leads me to touch upon the *extent* of redemption. You will see that I ought to offer a few words upon this point before I speak to you

of *personal* redemption. As to the extent of redemption there is a beautiful illustration in the 10th chapter of the Book of Exodus. When Moses was about to bring Israel out of Egypt, he asked Pharaoh's permission for them to depart, and the king said "Yes, you may go, but let your flocks and your herds be stayed." "No," said Moses, "that will never do; we must all go." "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go" (verse 9). All must go. "Our cattle also shall go with us: there shall not a hoof be left behind" (verse 26). It was to be a complete and perfect redemption. So it is as regards the redemption of the people of God. "There shall not a hoof be left behind." The least thing, the most trifling thing, the most insignificant thing belonging to the household of faith, must come up with the family. If it were not so, redemption would be incomplete; but all God's works are perfect. Compare what I have said with what is written in Exodus xii. 31-36. Redemption in its extent is stated by St. Paul in the 2nd chapter of his Epistle to Titus, the 13th and 14th verses: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us." For what purpose? "That He might redeem us from all iniquity," "and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." We are reminded of the words of the prophet: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hosea xiii. 14). You have now my ideas of the extent of redemption. It is complete and perfect, and extends to all the elect of God. The election of grace, the redemption of Christ, and the effectual calling of the Spirit are co-extensive. The salvation which we proclaim unto you is effected by the glorious Trinity in Unity. The Father choosing in love; the Son redeeming with Blood; and the Holy Ghost quickening the sinner by His Word and Grace. Lost sinners need such a salvation as this, and when persons know redemption for themselves, they are willing and ready to bless and praise the God of all grace for it.

I am anxious to say a few words to you about *personal* and *particular* redemption. What I mean will appear most clear if I give you a Scripture or two. St. Paul, Job, and others have spoken of redemption as a *personal* thing. "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II Timothy i. 12). He knew it for himself. This was a revelation to his soul by the Holy Ghost. This was personal. There was also an Old Testament saint who knew it for himself. Job says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth" (Job xix. 25-27). I cannot pass lightly over these remarkable words. "I know," this is the language of assurance. This was the Holy Ghost's persuasion of Job, enlightening his understanding and giving him a settled confidence in his Saviour. I know "my Redeemer," "my near kinsman." This is personal and experimental acquaintance with the head of the family, with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a blessed thing to be able to say "*my* Redeemer."



But my Redeemer "liveth," for He is the Eternal God, and Covenant Head of the Church. He liveth and reigneth in heaven for all the redeemed. Jesus proclaimed Himself on earth, "the Resurrection and the Life." He lives and therefore His people live. Job knew that his Redeemer should "stand at the latter day upon the earth." This expression is generally understood as referring to Christ's appearance in the flesh, or to His second coming, when the dead in Christ shall rise first. There is, however, another idea in it, which is this, the Redeemer shall stand the "last" upon the earth as a conqueror over all His enemies, and as the avenger of all his peoples' wrongs. "He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Jesus lived as the "First" and He shall live as the "Last." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the First and the Last." This is Job's Redeemer Whom he knew for himself. "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." This verse reads differently in the margin: "After I shall awake, though this body shall be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God." As if he had said, well, let this poor body of mine be destroyed by suffering and affliction, yet when I am out of it, I shall be present with my Redeemer and Saviour. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." "To live is Christ, to die is gain." "To be with Christ is far the best." I shall see God in Christ for myself face to face. "Whom I shall see for myself." This is expressive of Job's personal interest in his Near Kinsman. "Every eye shall see Him." Some shall see Him to their confusion and shame, but the rest to their joy and comfort. Job says, "I shall see Him *for myself*. I shall see Him on my side, and to my advantage. I shall see Him as my Advocate, and not as my Adversary." "And mine eyes shall behold Him and none other." He will be no "Stranger" to me. He will appear as my Friend and on my side. Job often heard of Jehovah by the hearing of the ear, but his eyes were to "behold" Him. To behold Him with admiration and adoration, to behold Him so as to be entirely taken up with Him. To behold Him as the beloved Standard-Bearer of His people. "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." The Near Kinsman will exhibit all His hid treasures to the household. "They shall behold My glory." Job's earnest longings are then expressed in these words: "My reins within me are consumed with earnest desire for that day." My reins, my heart's desires, my affections, are all consumed with earnest longings for the day of the Lord. "My soul within me pants for that day." When wilt Thou come, my Redeemer, and my God. Job was continually with the Lord. He knew he would guide him with His counsel here, and afterwards receive him to glory. He had no one in heaven like Jesus, and there was none upon earth he desired beside Him. His flesh and his heart failed him, but he knew God was the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. Here is personal, particular, and experimental redemption. Jacob could say, "The Angel redeemed me from all evil." Good old Simeon saw the salvation of the Lord; and Anna spoke comfortably to those who were looking for the Redeemer. "Fear not, ye children of God, for He



hath visited and redeemed His people Israel." I have now spoken to you of the "Redeemer," of the "redeemed," and of "redemption." It remains for me to say a few words to you upon our last point.

*The excellency of this Redemption. It is an Eternal Redemption.* This redemption is not a temporary deliverance, but an eternal one. It will abide for ever. Israel was redeemed out of Egypt and brought into the land of Canaan, but they did not abide there for ever. David's kingdom was to be for ever, but we know that literally it came to an end. Now, the redemption spoken of in the text shall know no end. The word 'eternal' means without end. Some may say, "Yes, it will be 'eternal,' if we believe, and if we do so-and-so." There are no such conditions proposed in the text. And, indeed, the word "eternal," as it occurs in the Scriptures, shews clearly what we are to understand by it when qualifying the redemption of the people of God. Notice some of its uses. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy xxxiii. 27). What do you mean by "Eternal" here? Do you not understand that God will never fail His people as a refuge, that His power will never be withdrawn from them, that He will be to them an everlasting refuge. Christ is an "Eternal" Priest. We read in the 110th Psalm and the 4th verse, that He abides "a Priest for ever," an everlasting Priest "after the order of Melchizedek." All other priests have failed and disappeared, but not so our Priest, He will never fail nor disappear, He abideth a Priest for ever. His sacrifice will last for ever and His redemption is eternal. The Holy Ghost is spoken of as the "Eternal" Spirit. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the *Eternal* Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. ix. 14). The Spirit of God is one and the self-same everlasting Spirit, and the work which He works is an abiding work. He gives a new heart, it shall abide for ever; it cannot be destroyed. His work is like Himself, it is eternal. The Gospel is an *Eternal* Gospel. John "saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the *everlasting* Gospel to preach unto" all persons dwelling upon the face of the earth. The everlasting Gospel of the ever blessed God. The Gospel of the Grace of God is eternally the same. There is *eternal* life; and what do we understand by eternal life? Christ gives eternal life to His sheep. It is life without end. Every person who has Christ has eternal life, or life which will never end. We read also of *eternal* glory (II Tim. ii. 10). Well, what do we understand by eternal glory? Is it not that glory which shall abide for ever. "We are called unto this eternal glory in Christ Jesus" (I Peter v. 10). It is an eternal weight of glory which is laid up for us in Heaven. Hence, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are *temporal*; but the things which are not seen are *eternal*" (II Cor. iv. 17, 18). The contrast is between *temporal* and *eternal* things. There is an *eternal* inheritance: "That they which are called might receive the promise of *eternal* inheritance." Happy are the children of God; for they have an eternal inheritance (Heb. ix. 15). Examine these things, for we have an eternal inheritance,

we have eternal glory, we have an everlasting Gospel, we have eternal life, we have an eternal Spirit, we have an everlasting Priest—Christ; and we have an eternal God, and we have also an eternal redemption. It is not like those redemptions which are temporary or transient, but eternal, abiding for ever. This is a redemption to the praise and glory of God in and through Christ Jesus, “Having obtained eternal redemption for us.”

A few words more and I have done. This eternal redemption springs from the love of God the Father. It is founded in the everlasting love of God. It was not because we loved Him, but because He loved us (I John iv. 19). So He sent His only begotten Son to redeem and to save us. This redemption is also secured by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the Blood of the everlasting covenant. This Blood speaks peace. He has made peace by the Blood of His Cross. He has perfected for ever the redemption of those for whom He shed His most precious Blood. The Holy Ghost reveals these truths, and gives a pledge to the hearts of the children of God, that the Blood of Christ has been shed for them, and that their names are written in heaven.

Beloved, let us reflect upon the words of our text, and whatever others may say of them, let us rejoice in and be thankful for the eternal redemption which our Near Kinsman has obtained for us. Let God the Father's grace be magnified. Let the Redeemer's name be extolled, and let the Holy Ghost be blessed and praised for his many assuring manifestations. May our hopes and aspirations be raised, and go out to that day when the Redeemer shall say to His Father: “Behold, I and the children which God has given Me.” O God, accomplish Thine own purposes of grace in us and by us, and to Thy name shall be ascribed all honour and glory, both now and for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord! **AMEN!!**

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# “GOD CALLED YOU.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 4TH, 1878.

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*St. Paul's 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians, the 2nd chapter and the 14th verse :*

“WHEREUNTO HE CALLED YOU BY OUR GOSPEL, TO THE OBTAINING OF THE GLORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

THE Apostle opens this chapter by reminding the Thessalonians of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the gathering together of the saints unto Him. The coming of Christ occupies a prominent place in both Epistles to the Thessalonians; and, connected with Christ's coming, we read that several remarkable things will happen, such as the resurrection of those that have fallen asleep in Him, their ascension and glory with the Lord. That these are some of the things which will then take place we gather from the 1st Epistle and the 4th chapter: “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we

ever be with the Lord" (verses 13 to 17). The Apostle then desires the Thessalonians to be comforted with the prospect of these things. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (verse 18). Although the Lord Jesus Christ will appear again to the joy, glory, and admiration of the saints, yet to the ungodly, and to them who know not Him, He will appear taking vengeance upon them and punishing them with everlasting destruction from His glorious presence. We read, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (II Thess. i. 7-10). Let us now examine the chapter whence the text is taken. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by (concerning) the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by (concerning) our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." The Apostle then mentions one or two great facts which must come to pass before the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed from heaven. Thus, that there is to be a great apostacy, and that they were not to be deceived as if the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ were immediate. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a *falling away* first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (verse 3). This man of sin is the man of lawlessness and destruction. He is described in the 4th verse as one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God,"—that is in the professing Church of God,—*"shewing himself that he is God."* If there be any ecclesiastical system upon the earth which answers to the description of the man of sin in this chapter, surely it is the system of popery. And this is true of the system of popery, not only as it exists in the Church of Rome, but as it is practised in other bodies of formal christians. But the Apostle speaks of some hindrance to the manifestation of antichrist: "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth," or what the hindrance is to the development and appearance of the man of sin, "that he might be revealed in his time." For even in the Apostle's day, he says: "The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." Whatever the hindrance was to the development of antichrist this was first to be taken out of the way before the lawless one should be revealed and made manifest. "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His Mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." There is to be a consumption and a destruction of the man of sin, but this will not be consummated until the Lord comes. We sometimes think as if we should like to get rid of him now, but we cannot. It is right for us who profess to be christians in deed and in



truth to be opposed, not only to that lawless system called Popery, but to every system which is in alliance with it. This man of sin will be known by his conduct. "Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause"—reflect upon the words, "For this cause"—"God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." The whole system of the man of sin is a lie, and God gives some strong delusion that they may believe it. And for what end? "That they all might be damned." These are strong words, but they are not mine. They are the words of the Holy Ghost by His servant. "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Let us now turn from the dark side of the picture and look at the following words as they are addressed to the Church of God: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord." Why? "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." By what means? "Through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto,"—unto salvation, unto eternal life, and unto eternal glory,—"God called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

*We shall now proceed to consider our text, and we shall do so in the following order:—First, there is God's call: "God called you." Secondly, the means, "through our Gospel." And thirdly, the end, "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

*First of all we have God's call. "God called you." I am about to speak not of a call to a civil office, nor of a call to the ministry, nor of that call to occupy various positions in life and in which we have to earn our daily bread. Nor shall I say a great deal upon that call which is described by some as a *general* call, but I must say a few words to you upon this point; for the old divines used to speak of a general and of a particular call—of an external and of an internal call. They made a marked difference between a general external call and a particular internal call by the Spirit. The former they regarded as not effectual, but the latter was. Personally I agree with the old writers, for I believe that their distinction is Scriptural. As regards the *general* call, I would ask you to read a few verses in the 1st chapter of the Book of Proverbs. Read from the 24th verse: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find Me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of My counsel: they despised all My reproof." I believe that this is just what every natural man does and will do. They did it in the time of Solomon. They did it in the time of Isaiah; hence he cries out: "Who hath believed our*



report?" But he stops not here, for he asks: "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Discriminating most carefully between hearing externally and feeling internally the power of the word. When our Lord was here upon earth, He tells us in that 11th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel that John came unto the Jews neither eating nor drinking,—and they said He had a devil. This was the estimate of the people respecting John the Baptist. Our Lord came both eating and drinking and they said of Him: "Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber." This is what that generation said of the Saviour. Our Lord said: "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." There was no general receiving either of John or of our Lord. They were set at nought. But our Lord consoles Himself with this saying: "Wisdom is justified of her children." Christ is the wisdom. "Christ the wisdom of God, and Christ the power of God" (I Corinthians i. 24). And this wisdom is justified of her children,—that is of the Church of God. Our Lord comforted Himself in this very chapter with these words: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,"—or from the learned and clever,—"and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight." He then speaks of the secrets laid up in His Father's heart, and which the Father unfolded to His Son, and His Son has unfolded them to His children. He speaks in very encouraging language to those who are broken in heart, to those who are hungry and thirsty, even to those whom He calls babes. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of me;" "For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." "I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." You see the difference in the quotation of this passage from the general way in which it is quoted. The babes, the hungry, the thirsty, and the needy, all these are affectionately and lovingly invited by our gracious and almighty Saviour. But as far as the mere general call is concerned, if this were all, who indeed, could be saved? I know not any. There must be something more than a general external call by the word. Such an outward call only will never bring a soul to know the Saviour.

Let us now touch upon the *personal, distinctive, and internal* call by the Spirit as standing in contrast with an external and general call. When I speak of an internal call I must endeavour to explain to you what I mean. I will illustrate this point by an example. Peter was preaching on the day of Pentecost, and he fastened upon the Jews this great fact, that they had crucified the Christ of God, and whilst he was preaching, it is said, that they were *pricked* to the heart and cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 37). This is one of the best signs, beloved, that can be given. Notice the language: "pricked to the heart." Pricked through and through. Who can get into the heart to do this? Can you, or I, or any other creature? No! But they were pricked to the heart by the sword of the Spirit. It had penetrated and they were

as dead men before the Lord. This is the very idea which our Lord conveys when he says: "He (the Spirit) shall *convince* the world of sin" (John xvi. 8). The word for "convince" is "to cut open." It is a very remarkable and powerful word; and gives us the same idea as when the priests of old used to cut open the victims in order to see whether they were fit for sacrifice. So the Lord, the Spirit, cuts open His people,—His victims—to see if they be fit for sacrifice, and He shows them that they are not fit to be offered to God, and hence He makes them cry out for another and perfect sacrifice, the only sacrifice, Christ Jesus, the Lord. Now this is what I call the personal, practical, internal, and effectual call of the Spirit of God. And I understand it to be this call that is spoken of in my text: "God calls you."

When God calls a person after this sort, it is an almighty and all powerful call. It is the working of His mighty power in the heart (Ephesians i. 19). It is the planting of a new spirit and a new heart within (Ezekiel xxxvi. 26). It is God's new creation (II Cor. v. 17). It is the effectual working of His Spirit making His people willing in the day of His power (Psalm cx. 3). My beloved brethren, has God called you? How important the question. May you be enabled to think about it! Now, when God calls a man you may rely upon it, that He always gets an answer. When he called Abraham, he responded and came out. When He called Lot out of Sodom, Lot might hesitate, but out of Sodom he must come. When He called Samuel, he said: "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." When He called the Apostle by His grace, he could not confer with flesh and blood as to what course he should take (Gal. i. 15, 16). He could not be disobedient unto the heavenly vision (Acts xxvi. 19). God's calls are effectual calls.

Now, let us look at the *persons* who are called. It is said of our Lord that "He called unto Him whom He would" (Mark iii. 13). Why! He called everybody to Him. Does it say so? Does it? Examine what it says: "He called unto Him whom He would." And He had a perfect right so to do. He is a sovereign. Then those persons whom He called to Himself are described in the Scriptures after this manner. They are said to be "vessels of mercy," "prepared for glory" (Romans ix. 23). They are "the poor and despised of this world," and nothing in their own eyes (I Cor. i. 28). They are sinners; Sinners! Yes, the worst of sinners. Why! The harlots go into the kingdom of God, and the great professing Pharisees are shut out (Matthew xxi. 31, 32). How is this? The Lord Jesus Christ came not to call the righteous. Who then? Sinners. What to? Repentance, which is repentance to salvation (Matthew ix. 13). These are the persons called, and this is how they are described in the sacred Scriptures.

This call is according to God's *own purpose and grace*, and not according to man's plan, device, or working (II Tim. i. 9). The Apostle says that it was God Who saved us by His mercy and grace, that the salvation which we have through Jesus Christ is not of works lest any man should boast (Ephesians ii. 8, 9). Does someone say,

“Well then, you are about to do away with works?” Entirely so, beloved, if it be in the matter of salvation; entirely so if it be in the matter of justification. But if you will allow me to use a word, we will not exclude works altogether for they serve as an *ornamentation*, showing what the gospel of the grace of God has done for us. They are the external livery worn by the servants of God. Now what we have done is to put works in their proper place, and assure you that they are in no sense the cause of our salvation. Our salvation was not only promised to us, but given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began. It has been from eternity and will continue to eternity. And why? because it is of grace and not of works. Our salvation rests not upon our obedience, nor upon our believing, nor upon our being good, but upon that grace which is laid up in Christ Jesus our Lord. Salvation by grace excludes works in any other sense than that which we have named above. Let us think of magnifying the grace of God as St. Paul did after he had been effectually called. “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen.” Then he says that he did not confer, or consult with flesh and blood. The Apostle could say: “Lord do with me as Thou pleasest.” What an effectual calling was His? He was made to feel very little in his own eyes, and to see God Almighty very great. It was this which made him magnify the riches of God’s grace in saving him and calling him. But this calling is a “*holy calling*.” It is God’s holy call. God is holy, the Spirit is holy, Christ is holy, the religion of Jesus Christ is holy, and He calls us unto holiness. Hence everything connected with this calling is holy—“Holiness to the Lord.” This calling of which we are speaking is a *heavenly calling*. “Holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly calling*” (Hebrews iii. 1). Every effectual call is from heaven, a voice from heaven. There was once heard a voice from heaven speaking to Jesus Christ, saying: “This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased” (Matthew iii. 17). It is the same voice that comes to the dead sinner and speaks to him. “Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee” (Isaiah xxx. 21). Why behind thee? Because the sinner has got his face on hell and his back on heaven. “Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.’” (Isaiah xxx. 21). Then again, the Spirit who works effectually in this calling is from heaven. The gospel itself comes from heaven. Everything that saves the sinner comes from heaven. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will,” like a sovereign, “begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures” (James i. 17, 18). This heavenly calling is a call to heaven. Yes! “to the praise of the glory of His grace” (Ephesians i. 6). This calling is said to be a “*high calling*,” or a calling from on high, to high and heavenly things. I think when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to

the Philippians that his mind must have been lifted up to things on high, for he says in the 3rd chapter, and the 13th and 14th verses: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind." "Those things which are behind." What a number of things the Apostle would have to forget. Look at all the things that he had done as a Jew. He mentions several of them in this chapter. Well, he says: "Forgetting those things which are behind." Look at all the sufferings and hardships and labours which he had passed through since he became a Christian, still, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." What a race he was engaged in! He was running and stretching forth to lay hold of the prize before him. Heaven was before him. Glory was before him. Christ had gone before him. "I press toward the mark,"—Christ was the mark. "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." High calling. Called to be kings and priests, called to eternal glory, called to sit with Christ in heavenly places. "The mark for the prize of the high calling." This is indeed a high calling. It is a love call, an immutable and unchangeable call, for "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans xi. 29). "I am in one mind," saith God, "I change not." Well now look at this: "God called you." What a glorious call to be called by Him who changes not, nor repents of His having called you. There may be some in this Church to-night whose thoughts are going back to the time when God first moved in their souls, when they durst not say a word to anybody about it, neither tell anyone how wretched they felt. Well, God was working in them repentance unto life. They went quietly out of sight to tell all to God, with sighs, and sobs, and tears, and groans. Oh for such an effectual call as this! It is a call to heaven and to glory. It is a high, holy, and heavenly calling. It is God's call. "God called you."

*Consider secondly—the means by which God called these Thessalonians. "By our Gospel."* Was it Paul's Gospel? Yes, it was, but it was Paul's Gospel by virtue of his union with the Lord Jesus Christ. And it was a blessed Gospel, a glorious Gospel; good news from a far country,—from heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ brought it down. The angel proclaimed and published it. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke ii. 11, 14). Here you have the good news declared. But I cannot go into the particulars of the Gospel. I wish to dwell upon it as the means which God employs in calling sinners to a saving knowledge of Himself. This means I understand to be the preached Gospel accompanied with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. With regard to the Gospel, I wish you to have such a view of it as is presented to my own mind. You may agree or disagree with me as you please. I shall put it before you as it appears to me. We shall, therefore, have to turn to the 10th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and read a few verses together "How then shall they call on



Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written; "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Let us read these verses backwards. What is the first thing? The Gospel of peace is the glad tidings and good news. But it must be made known. And the Lord is never at a loss for a preacher. For, if He has good news to proclaim, He Himself will raise up preachers to publish it. So He sends forth preachers. What then? Persons must hear it. Some hear it with the outward ear, and others with the circumcised ear. Those who hear it aright have their ears spiritually bored and the stoppers of ignorance removed,—they hear it, understand it, and live. They hear it, and believe it. What do they believe? They believe the good news, the glad tidings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then what? They pray or call upon Him. They would never have done so if they had not heard the Gospel. "But," say some, "they have always heard it, and if they prayed and believed they would be saved." Now, this is not the way the Apostle puts it, but just the reverse. Man naturally holds wrong views of religion, for he always tries to do something for himself to obtain God's favour. But God's love must first be shed abroad in the sinner's soul. Then what? He delights in the preacher's words, and in the things of God,—he lives, he believes, and he prays. And hence it is said: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts ii. 21). It is to the real callers upon the Lord to whom the promises are made. The calling of sinners by the Gospel is one of the golden links in the golden chain of Salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ committed His Gospel to His Apostles, and they preached it. They preached it as good news and glad tidings to the needy and helpless, and to such is God's Salvation sent. "Preach the word," said the Apostle. This is just what every minister of God has to preach. When he has done this, then let him stop. If he begins to preach himself, you may venture to say that it is time for him to shut off. And if he begin to preach to a congregation with an eye to pleasing them, why you will easily see through it. I need not enlarge, for you know that mere man pleasing and time serving is an abomination in the sight of God. Therefore, "preach the word." Preach Christ, as St. Paul did. What was the effect of his preaching? Why, souls were saved. The Holy Ghost blesses the Word when it is preached. Two passages I shall give you in proof: "And I, brethren, when I came to you (Corinthians), came not with excellency of speech, nor of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." He was determined that his preaching should be Christ as the Head of the Church and the Saviour of the body. He preached Christ and Him Crucified, for the Lord, when He was nailed to the accursed tree, bore away all the sins of His people. "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And n.y speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom." But there was something about it



which told upon the ears and hearts of those who heard it. Well, what was it? It came "in demonstration of the spirit and of power." Why? "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I Cor. ii. 1-5). Is not this right? Here are the means. The preaching of the Gospel, and the accompanying of the same by the Holy Ghost to the hearts and consciences of men. The very same thing we read took place when Paul preached to the Thessalonians. "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power." Who gave it power? Why, the Holy Ghost. "And in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye knew what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (I Thessalonians i. 5). The Apostles were weak and poor and despised. But the gospel preached by them produced marvellous effects. "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost" (verse 6). Now, this is the means which God employs in reaching the hard hearts of sinners. It was so on the day of Pentecost. When Peter preached the Word, the Holy Ghost accompanied it, and used it as a sword to pierce the hearts of those who heard it, and to bring them to the feet of Christ. The promises of God are to "as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts ii. 39). Now the Holy Ghost works in such a way upon persons, and in them, that they cannot do what they please, but what He pleases. God knew all those whom He inclines to Himself by His sovereign power. And He teaches them to know also that He, and He alone, has inclined them to Himself, and that they are His servants, and must serve Him. That He has called them from a state of Spiritual death, from the curse of God's law, from bondage and slavery. That He has called them out of darkness and danger, out of the world and hell. That He has translated them from the power of Sin and Satan into the kingdom of His own dear Son. The means which God honours in doing all this is "Our Gospel." The truth of God owned and blessed by the Spirit. Can I put it more clearly to you? One or two questions before I leave this second head. Has God the Holy Ghost wrought effectually in your souls? In yours, and yours, and yours? And, personally, has God the Holy Ghost thus wrought effectually in mine? Religion is a personal thing not between the minister and the people, but between them and their God. A person is either called by the word and Spirit, or he is not. This is as the matter stands in God's word. If he be not called, he is still in his sins, under the curse, and without hope. But if he be *inwardly* called by the Spirit, he knows what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of grace and glory in Christ Jesus.

*This leads me to notice our third point, on which I shall be brief. It is "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Or, in other words, into the possession of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. To possess and to enjoy the glory of Jesus Christ. Is it so? Yes. Look into the 1st Epistle, and read in the 2nd chapter these words, at the 12th verse: "That ye would walk worthy of God, Who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." Kingdom and glory. What is His kingdom? The Apostle tells us: "The kingdom of God is not meat*

and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans xiv. 17). This is the kingdom of God which He sets up in the hearts of His children, and they are brought into the enjoyment of it, and to behold the glory of the Lord. They see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. iv. 6). Did not our Lord pray in that 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel, "That they may behold My glory"? (verse 24). The glory of Jesus is the same as that which He puts upon His people. I behold in the glory of Jesus my justification and righteousness, my redemption and sanctification, my safety and salvation, my all is in Jesus, and Jesus is my all. The child of God is called into the possession and enjoyment of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a present possession and a present enjoyment. Is it not a wonderful thing to be made a partaker of grace and glory in Christ Jesus? But this is not all, for we are "called out of darkness," into what? Into "*marvellous light*" (I Peter ii. 9). We are very dark, naturally, about the sinfulness of the world, ourselves, and Satan's power ; and about God's Word, and Christ, and heaven. But when we are brought out of this darkness into "*marvellous light*," we see light in His light. "God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." Where? "In the face of Jesus Christ." Glorious light! But this light is also connected with *life*. No man has light in Christ without having life in Him. Christ is life as well as light. Again, a man is called to *liberty*. So says the Apostle: "Stand fast therefore in the *liberty* wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. v. 1, 13). Were we slaves then? Yes. To whom? To sin, and self, the world, and Satan. But now we are no longer slaves. No! indeed. We are free men in Christ Jesus. We have "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." The liberty of enjoyment, the liberty of communion and fellowship with our Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the very essence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus to make us free from the law of sin and death. This is indeed a glorious liberty. Liberty to love God and to walk in His ways. Liberty to look forward and to live without fear. Liberty to pray and praise. And liberty to hold communion with Christ. "God is faithful, by Whom ye were called unto the *fellowship* of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Oh! to have fellowship with Him! What is it? It is to speak to Him as our Elder Brother, and to tell Him what we feel and need. Lord, Thou knowest my foolishness, and my ignorance, and my blindness, they are not hid from Thee. Lord, Thou knowest me altogether. Dear Saviour, have mercy upon me and speak comfortably to my soul, "Say to my soul, I am thy salvation." "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John i. 3); and with the Holy Ghost (II Cor. xiii. 14). We are called also unto the fellowship of Christ's *sufferings*. "Christ has left us an example, that we should follow His steps" (I Peter ii. 21). If we suffer, we must take care that we suffer for Christ's sake. It might be otherwise. Some persons have thought that they were enduring persecutions and sufferings for Christ's sake

when it was for their own sake and self glorification. It is no uncommon thing for a person to suffer on account of his hard speeches, unkind words, and bad tempers, but then such suffering as this is not for Christ's sake. A person of this sort merits all he gets, and frequently more than he gets. Persecutions and sufferings must be for God's sake, for Christ's sake, for the Gospel's sake, and for the truth's sake, for "even hereunto were ye called." Then again, we are called unto *peace*. It is a very difficult thing to live in peace with everybody, but it is to be so as much as possible (Romans xii. 18). St. Paul knew that it was impossible to live in peace with everybody. We are, however, called to peace,—to "peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. v. 1). Peace we have through His Blood. This peace passes all understanding. God has called us to the practice of peace (I Cor. vii. 15). We are called also to *holiness*. "God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (I Thess. iv. 7). "God who called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter i. 15, 16). "God has called us to *glory* and *virtue* through Jesus Christ our Lord" (II Peter i. 3). "And He has called us to *eternal glory* by Christ Jesus" (I Peter v. 10).

I shall now conclude with two or three remarks bearing upon the subject under consideration. First, what are the *evidences* that God has called you? If you have been called by God's grace you have spiritual life in you. You are new creatures in Christ Jesus. You have liberty in Christ, and all that is in Him is yours, and the spirit has brought you to a knowledge of these things: "All things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (I Cor. iii. 21–23). Gather up your evidences and see what the children of God are called unto.

The Apostle also gives a *direction* how christians are to conduct themselves. Meditate upon the following Scripture: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Can we find out what this vocation is? The next verse tells us: "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Now this is walking worthy of our high and holy vocation, and "Hereunto are ye called."

For the *comfort* of God's children take another passage and with this I shall close. All those who have been called have had a golden link dropped into their souls; and it cannot be broken. Let us examine the golden chain which I have already mentioned. Let us read a few verses in the 8th of Romans beginning at the 28th verse: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Does everybody love God? I do not think so. There was a time when you and I did not. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called by the Holy Ghost according to His purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus. "For whom He did foreknow. He also did predestinate." Here are two things, foreknowledge and predestination. Why did God foreknow them? simply because He did

predestinate them. And He predestinated them to be "conformed to the image of His own dear Son." *Inward* and *outward* conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called." "Whom He called, them He also justified." Justified them in Christ, so that there should be no charge against them. "And whom He justified, them He also glorified." Glorified them in Christ Jesus. The Apostle seemed lost when he uttered these words, and broke forth in the following language: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Freely, fully, and everlastingly give us all things. "Faithful is He who calleth you, Who also will do it." "God called you, by our gospel," into the possession of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen.

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# “PRESERVED IN CHRIST.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, MAY 2ND, 1878.

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*The General Epistle of Jude, and part of the 1st Verse.*

“PRESERVED IN JESUS CHRIST.”

THE writer of this Epistle bears the name of Jude, who was one of the twelve Apostles, and whose brother, we are told, was James; not that James who was killed by Herod with the sword, but James, the son of Alphœus, and the writer most probably of the General Epistle which bears his name. We have two brothers, then, according to this, bearing excellent testimony to that truth which they had received from their Lord and Master. In this Epistle, Jude speaks of the office to which he had been called. He was “the servant of Jesus Christ.” A person may be a servant of sin, of the world, of the flesh, and of the devil but Jude was a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the highest service to which a person can be raised here upon earth, or in heaven. The service of Jesus is dignified and honourable. The persons to whom the Apostle addressed this Epistle are particularized thus: “to them that are sanctified by God the Father,” to the “preserved in Christ Jesus,” and to those who are “called” by the Holy Ghost. I wish you to notice these words well, for the Trinity is here brought out. “Sanctified by God the Father.” There is another word for sanctified, for there are two readings. The other reading is, the beloved of God the Father. How true it is that those who are sanctified by the Father are also the beloved of the Father. Read the expression either way, and it is true that the people of God are both sanctified by the Father and beloved by the Father. They are then described in our text as being “preserved in Jesus Christ.” They were always “preserved in Him,” for the Father gave them an eternal standing in Him, so that before they were born into this world they were preserved in Him their Head; and after they were born into this world, and before they were born again of the Spirit of God, they were preserved in Him and then “called,” and after they were born again of the Spirit of God, as described in this verse, they are, and for ever will be, preserved in Him. They are preserved in Christ Jesus unto His heavenly kingdom, which has been prepared for them from before the foundation of the world.



The subject which I wish to bring before you this evening is sometimes designated the *conservation* of the saints, sometimes the *preservation* of the saints, and sometimes the *final perseverance* of the saints. I do not wish to be very particular in using these terms. I shall prefer giving you a comprehensive view of the whole subject, as couched under the terms already named. The conservation of the saints by God the Father, their preservation in Jesus Christ, and their final perseverance in grace to glory through the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost, is a great and glorious truth, plainly revealed in the Scriptures for the comfort and encouragement of the children of God. There have been some excellent writers upon this subject. I know of no one to whom I should give precedence sooner than to ELISHA COLES, a writer known to most of you. DOCTOR GILL wrote well upon the final perseverance of the saints. The learned WITSIUS has also written admirably upon the conservation of the saints. The immortal TOPLADY has written elegantly, beautifully, and sweetly upon the safety of God's people. And in our own day, the late eminent and trenchant Rector of Openshaw, the Rev. W. PARKS, is not a wit behind in testifying to this truth of God. His sermons on the Five Points will always be read with pleasure and profit. I might mention others who have written upon the same subject. In gathering up the truth which I am about to bring before you this evening, allow me to state to you at the outset the course I generally take in preparing upon any subject which I preach upon. And I do this because you might easily find some of the ideas which I shall give you to-night in writers two or three hundred years ago. The course I generally take is this. I read the Bible first, classifying the scriptures which I think bear upon the subject. Having done this and then having formed my own thoughts upon the passages under consideration, I then see what some eminent servants and saints of God have thought and said upon the subject before me. If they instruct me, I avail myself of their instruction, and I give it to you. Sometimes I forget the good things which they have written, and sometimes I give you what I never thought of giving you when I entered the pulpit. Generally, you have the result of my own thoughts and reading upon any subject which I venture to speak upon in your presence. The course which others take in preparing for the pulpit I know not, neither does it concern me. I shall now proceed with the subject.

*I shall endeavour to shew you in the First place, that the conservation, preservation, and final perseverance of the saints in grace to glory, is clearly revealed to us in the Scriptures; Secondly, I shall support this view by an argument drawn from the relationship in which believers stand to the Trinity; and Thirdly, I shall notice two or three objections to the doctrine, concluding with a few practical observations.*

This, beloved, is a very wide field, and you will scarcely expect me to go through it fully in the time generally allotted for a sermon. Volumes have been written upon the subject, and well written too. I cannot give you all, but I will give you some leading thoughts, and the rest you must try to supply for yourselves.

*My first point shortly put is this, the preservation of the Saints in grace to glory is clearly revealed to us in the Scriptures. In dealing with our*

first point we may catch a thought or two when we consider, that God, in His providence has often vouchsafed a *temporal* preservation to His people: He preserved Noah and his family in the Ark from perishing by water, and Lot in Sodom. And hence we reason, that if He has been pleased to grant temporal preservation, will He not also grant a spiritual and eternal preservation to His Saints in grace to glory. He promised the Land of Canaan to the seed of Abraham (Gen. xii. 7). It was a long time before this was accomplished. From four to five hundred years passed before Joshua could say: "For the Lord our God, He it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and *preserved* us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed." "Not one thing failed which God had promised, all came to pass" (Joshua xxiii. 14). Consider the disappointments and trials Abraham met with after he had received the promise. Think of the life of Isaac, and of the wanderings of Jacob. Joseph is sold into Egypt and Israel must sojourn there, but the Lord preserves them. From two to three hundred years pass away and then the Lord brings them up, and carries them through that great and terrible wilderness, and finally places them in the land of Canaan. "The Lord gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Joshua xxi. 43-45). This you see is the providential preservation of His people, according to promise. We might enlarge upon this subject, for this wonderful people is still preserved as a distinct people amongst all the nations upon the face of the earth. Whatever God may have to accomplish in, or by them is beside our point. Then we must remember the fact that the Lord has preserved many of His people for special and particular ends. He preserved Abraham to be the father of a special nation. He preserved Moses for the special purpose of delivering the Israelites. Joshua was raised up and preserved to be the leader of the children of Israel into the land of Canaan. David was raised up and specially preserved to sit upon the throne of Israel. Jeremiah was preserved to be a prophet; and the great Apostle Paul was raised up and specially preserved to be the preacher of the glorious Gospel to the Gentiles. God's wonderful preservation of His servants stands out most prominently in the Word of God. I have mentioned some instances and I might name many more. The three Hebrew children were preserved in the fiery furnace; Daniel in the den of Lions; and Jonah in the deep. I throw out these facts to shew you that God has often raised up and preserved His servants for special and particular ends. These are examples of temporal preservation.

Let me now show you how this holds good *spiritually*, the Lord preserving His people and causing them to persevere in grace to glory. This, I have to show you, is a truth clearly revealed in the Scriptures.

I meet with very considerable opposition to this doctrine,—and I really do not know why, and especially, why any of God's children should object to it, for it yields so much comfort and pleasure to all true believers. They ought, I say, rather to rejoice in it than speak against it. However, I shall give you a few passages which will prove that this doctrine is revealed in Scriptures. I take the first from the Book of Job, the 17th chapter, and the 9th verse: "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." Job spake these words: "The righteous." Who are they? Those whom God makes righteous in Christ Jesus. "He shall hold on his way,"—the only way, the narrow way, and the holy way. What a blessed thing it is, that we have this statement that the believer "shall hold on his way"! And that "he who hath clean hands,"—that is, he who gives evidence that he is one of God's children in reality,—"shall be stronger and stronger" by the power of the Holy Ghost, and shall not fail in his journey. This, if there were no other passage, I think, would be sufficient to establish the truth of the perseverance of the saints. Again, in the 84th Psalm, we have these words in the 5th and following verses: "Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, everyone of them in Zion appeareth before God." There is no mishap. They all land in Zion before God, to Whom be all honour and praise for His preserving grace. "He giveth power to the faint: and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah xl. 29, 31). "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth ever for ever" (Psalm cxxv). What do you think of such passages as these? "They that trust in the Lord" cannot be removed out of the hands of God. Their names are in the book of life. God himself put them there, and He is His own secretary. Neither man nor Devil can take the name of a child of God out of the book of the living. Believers have their names graven on the palms of His hands and it is impossible to erase them. They cannot be removed from the Foundation neither can they be plucked out of Christ. "The righteous shall never be removed" (Proverbs x. 30). The Lord has declared that "He will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance" (Psalm xciv. 14). "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth them" (Psalm cxxxviii. 8). Now read the 40th verse in the 32nd Chapter of Jeremiah: "I will make an everlasting covenant with them." Observe the words and consider the nature of this covenant. "I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." And then He "will rejoice over them to do them good." If there be difficulties in the way He gets over them thus: "I will put My fear in their hearts." Then they shall fear Me, and love Me, and

shall rejoice in My goodness. Who then can bring any more objections against the preservation of the saints in grace to glory? I shall not dwell on any more passages in the Old Testament, but, I will take two or three from the New Testament. There is one which our Lord uttered in the 10th chapter of St. John's Gospel. You are all familiar with it. I will read it: "I give unto them (my sheep) eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, Who gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one. This is the doctrine of the conservation, of the preservation, and final perseverance of the saints. As to those who heard our Lord's words they were ready to take up stones to stone Him. Did I say that they were ready to take up stones to stone Him? It is said: "then the Jews took up stones to stone Him" (verse 31). And I dare say that there are those now, who, although they do not take up stones literally to stone those who hold and preach the same doctrines which our Lord taught, yet they have not done throwing stones of another sort to hurt and injure them as much as possible. But the Lord can put out His hand and catch the stones, and hence the children of God come by no real harm. There is another passage in the 16th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock," meaning Christ Himself as the rock, for He is the everlasting rock, and upon this rock He builds His "Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." My brethren, whether your views be the same as mine I know not, but I judge favourably of you, that you believe, according to this verse, that if the Church of God could be thrown from its foundation, the Lord's words would not be true, and the gates of hell, and the powers of darkness would have prevailed against His word and His Church. But blessed be God, His word cannot be broken and His Church cannot be lost. Believers are solicitously preserved in Christ Jesus. They are preserved from the curse of the law, the dominion of sin, the evil of the world, and finally from wrath to come. Jehovah keeps the feet of His saints. He never forsakes them, but preserves them for ever (Psalm xxxvii. 28). He preserves them in their going out and coming in even for evermore (Psalm cxxi.) He preserves them unto His heavenly kingdom (II Tim. iv. 18). Need I produce any further evidence in confirmation of my first point, "That the preservation of the saints in grace to glory is clearly revealed to us in the Scriptures!"

*Secondly, I shall support this view by an argument drawn from the relationship in which believers stand to the Trinity.* And, here be it understood that God is a Father: "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians vi. 18). The Lord Jesus Christ is the elder brother who has given His life for his brethren. The Holy Ghost is the great revealer of the Gospel and comforter of the Church.

Let us see then how we can build up an argument in favour of the final perseverance of the saints from the relationship of believers to the Trinity. God is a Father to His people, and, as a Father, what has He done for them? St. Paul says, speaking as moved by the Holy Ghost:



“God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thess. v. 9). Beloved, what more do we want from our Father? He has appointed His children to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Suppose now, for a moment, that they did not obtain salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Then our Father’s appointment would be frustrated. Would it not be derogatory to have such a thought of our heavenly Father? But I will show you that he cannot go back from His Word. God is a God who changeth not, and, as a Father, whatever He has said He will do for His people, that He will most certainly perform. What are His words? “He is in one mind, and who can turn Him?” (Job xxiii. 13). He does as He pleases, and performs everything according to the counsel of His own will. How does He speak in the 3rd chapter of the book of Malachi and the 6th verse? “I am the Lord, I change not.” And what is the conclusion which He draws from this? “Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” But will not God change if we fail to do our part, to repent and to pray, to believe and be good? I have already told you that God has a way of His own for overcoming all difficulties with His people. He brings them into dust and ashes before Him. He makes them to wrestle with Him, and to say with Jacob of old: “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me” (Genesis xxxii. 26). God will bring His people to a knowledge of Himself. He will pardon the sons of Jacob, that they may go to heaven and enjoy His salvation. As a Father, God is full of love, of mercies, and compassions towards His children. What does He say: “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” When did He love them? Was it when they were beginning to love Him, or turn to Him? St. Paul tells us that He loved them when they were “dead in trespasses and in sins” (Ephesians ii. 1). Here then is the amazing love of God; and having loved them in that low estate, He drew them with “cords of a man,” and “bands of love” which can never be broken (Hosea xi. 4). Again, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness” (Lamentations iii. 22). I believe that He will never change. His compassions, His mercies, His faithfulness, His love, are ever the same towards His children. “They are new every morning,” therefore believers “are not consumed,” and being “not consumed, they shall be preserved unto the kingdom which God has prepared for them.” The Father’s *wisdom* is engaged for the preservation of the saints. God never can be surprised. He knows all things from first to last. Not a thought has passed through our minds to-day, but God knew it beforehand. Of our words and works I need not speak. I have already explained some of God’s providences. God in His infinite wisdom makes “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans viii. 28). “All things”—you say, yes. What, our bad tempers, our evil words, our wicked doings, and our misfortunes? Yes, all things are working together for good, for God will not be disappointed, neither will He suffer His purposes to be frustrated. “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are



the called according to His purpose." Here then is the wisdom of God over-ruling, controlling, directing, and guiding everything for the good of the saints. God's *honour* is also at stake for He has declared, that "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation" (Isaiah xlv. 17). But suppose God's sons and daughters should not be saved, but, through some mishap, they should be left to perish, where then would the honour of God be? But God will never leave His sons and daughters to perish; hence His honour shall be established. Our God is a *righteous* God. He is satisfied with the righteousness of Christ. He will never ask for a second payment from His people. I mean from those for whom Christ laid down His life, the just for the unjust. God is just, and the justifier of all those who believe in Jesus. The sinner's debts have been paid. The debtor goes free. In this the righteousness of God is exalted and the saints are preserved. Again, God's *power* is engaged for the safe keeping of the saints. "They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Peter i. 5). Paul was persuaded that God was able to keep that which he had committed unto Him against that day (II Tim. i. 12). And again, God is *faithful*, so that whatever He has promised to His people that He will also perform. Hear the following words: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body. What? the whole spirit, and the whole soul, and the whole body? Yes. "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be *preserved* blameless." How long? "Unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I. Thess. v. 23). And what reason does he assign for this? Is it because we believe? Or, because we have said our prayers? Is it so? No! Look what the Holy Ghost says. "Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it." This is the reason why the saints will persevere in grace to glory—because God is faithful. The first part of the argument drawn from the relationship in which believers stand to the Trinity, is this—that God as the Father of His people is an unchangeable God—that He is a God full of love, mercy, and compassion—that He is a God of wisdom and honour, of righteousness and power, of faithfulness, truth and holiness; therefore the saints are preserved in grace to glory.

The second part of the argument is drawn from the Church's *union* with the Lord Jesus Christ as the elder brother. The Church is one with Christ, chosen in Him and preserved in Him. She has been redeemed by Him. Think of the work that He has accomplished on her behalf. The Church of God was given to Christ by the Father to be taken care of by Him, and our Lord says: "Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost none" (John xviii. 9). "The son of perdition is lost" (John xvii. 12). Now, look at this. The Lord Jesus Christ, our elder brother, has taken our place, and has satisfied Divine justice. He has redeemed our souls (II Samuel iv. 9) out of all adversity. He has risen again from the dead. He has "ascended up on high, and led captivity captive" (Ephesians iv. 8; Psalm lxxviii. 18). And now He "appears in the presence of God for" His people (Hebrews ix. 24). He appears as their Advocate, as their Intercessor, as their "Brother born for adversity" (Proverbs xvii. 17). He is the One Who can lay

His hand upon both, being God and Man. He can say, "Smite Me, but let these go free." Now, if the children of God were lost, then all this work of Christ would be in vain? My brethren, we are not of those who believe or think that the work of Christ can be in vain! He accomplished all that God intended. The redemption of the Church is complete and perfect for ever. Man must let it alone. The Lord Jesus Christ cannot remain in heaven without His bride. He has loved her, and given Himself for her, that He might sanctify her, cleanse her, and wash her, and finally present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians v. 25-27). The Church is preserved in Jesus Christ to His kingdom and glory.

The third part of the argument for the preservation of the saints in grace to glory is drawn from the work of the Spirit in them. The Holy Ghost is spoken of as the Regenerator: "Ye must be born again" of the Holy Ghost (John iii. 7). What does the Apostle say when he is speaking to those who have been born of God? "Being confident of this very thing, that He Who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6). Look at the work begun. It is God's work. Who began it? Not man, but God, Who will continue it! How long will He continue it? "Until the day of Jesus Christ." This is what we call the final perseverance, or preservation of the saints by the power of the Holy Ghost working in them. This includes a great deal more than I have stated in these few words. Our Lord said, when He was going away from His disciples, that He would send the Holy Ghost unto them: and if He sent Him unto them, He should *abide* with them, as in the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel, the 16th verse: "And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may *abide* with you for ever." The Holy Ghost's work is to regenerate, to instruct, to teach, and to guide. He remains in the saved souls for this very purpose. Christ comforted His disciples. "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (verse xviii). And He comes in power and by the Spirit, as we read in the 16th chapter of St. John's Gospel, the 13th and 14th verses. "Howbeit when He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth." Well, what is the meaning of this? The children of God often err and make mistakes in passing through the wilderness. And often, they have to groan, and mourn, and weep over them. But look here, Jesus says: "He will guide you into all truth." Christ is the truth; He is the God of truth, and He is the whole truth. "For the Spirit shall not speak of Himself: but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come"—Coming resurrection, coming life with Christ, coming glory with God for evermore. "He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." What more shall I say then upon these points? I hope you see that the saints of God must persevere, must be preserved in grace unto glory, or, the whole work of a Triune Jehovah would be a failure. The Father's love would fail. His mercy would fail. His wisdom would fail. His honour would fail. His power would fail. His faithfulness would fail. All His perfections

would be sullied with failure. The love of Christ would be in vain. His Death would be in vain. His Resurrection would be in vain. His Ascension and Session would be in vain. His entire work would be in vain. The power of the Holy Ghost in a man's soul; His instruction and guidance would all be frustrated if the children of God were not finally preserved in grace to glory. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for thou art anointed and sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption. God's promises are all yea and Amen in Christ Jesus to the praise and glory of God the Father.

*In the third place I shall notice two or three objections to the doctrine, and conclude with a few practical observations.* One of the first objections I shall name is this. Do not the Scriptures speak of some that shall fall away? Is it not written that: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened . . . if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance"? (Hebrews vi. 4 to 6). And: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians x. 12)? "And ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. v. 4). Does it not appear from such passages as these that those who are born again of God, may after all fall and perish? Now, let us just look at this. Let us carefully consider it. We have often met with persons holding the doctrine that persons may fall, and fall foully too; yet this does not prove that they fall everlastingly. Poor old Noah fell, you know he got drunk—this was a sad fall,—a foul fall. But do you think that Noah was *not* finally preserved? No, you do not think so. Poor Noah arrived safely at God's Right Hand. He was an heir of righteousness which is by faith (Heb. xi. 7). Abraham got into difficulties and turned to lying. It just shows how godly persons may fall. Lot, too, fell terribly. And yet his righteous soul was vexed with the conversation of the wicked (II Peter ii. 7, 8). David fell, but the Lord restored him, and made him to bow at the Throne of Grace, crying for mercy and pity. And poor Peter! When we think of him—frightened into lying by a little maid! How easily overthrown if left to the assaults of Satan are the strongest and boldest of God's saints. Who doubts Peter's salvation? On one occasion all the disciples of our Lord "forsook Him, and fled" (Mark xiv. 50). Now, my friends, how many times have we forsaken Christ? You know in what sense I mean, when you have been afraid to confess Him before men. How many times have you softened down expressions lest you should offend Mr. or Mrs. so and so, because they held opposite opinions? How often have such things happened? I am afraid they could not be counted. Believers fall frequently, even seven times a day, but we commend not their falls. Though a believer falls, yet he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth all them that fall. There is a fall spoken of in the Scriptures which may be total. But then it is only a fall from a *profession* of religion. Some persons make a great profession, at certain times, of religion. They go to church, or to chapel. Some run well professionally for awhile. But what when persecution, or trial, or trouble comes,—what then? Well, they will begin to find fault with their Minister or their chapel, or church, or they will have something else for an excuse, to cloak and cover their deceit. What becomes of

them then? I generally give them a few days, or weeks, or months at the most, and there is an end of *their* religion. These never fall from Christ; they only fall from their outward profession. Look what is stated by St. John, in his 1st Epistle, the 2nd chapter, the 19th verse. There were some such in his days "They went out from us." Why? Because "they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us." Their continuance would have proved the truth of their religion. "But they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." They fell from the profession,—but not from the possession of religion. Never! never can a man finally fall from Christ! I have shown you that God's children may fall, and that they do fall, but they are restored again. Others fall from a mere outward profession. And are like the dog which returns to his vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire (II Peter ii. 22). Some of this class followed our Lord for awhile: "Many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." They said: "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" They murmured at Christ's words. Then He asked them: "Doth this offend you?" Well, what became of all these mere outward professors who followed our Saviour because of the loaves and fishes? They "went back." That was their fall. What more? They "walked no more with Him." This was final. They had had enough of Him. Will you, for a moment, think of these persons? They heard the truth; but they had it not in their hearts? Our Lord addressed His disciples in the concluding part of the chapter. He said to them: "Will ye also go away?" (verse 67). Peter replied: "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (verses 68, 69). "To whom shall we go?" "There is no one to whom we can go but to Thee, Thou art our Saviour, or we must perish for ever." Our Lord reminds them lower down in the chapter: "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (verse 70). Judas fell from his profession, but he was a devil.

A second objection brought against the doctrine is this, that it makes persons very *indifferent* and very *negligent* of the means of grace. I shall speak of neglecting the means of grace first. Now, I want to know what the means of grace are. I presume that reading the Word of God is a means of grace. Hearing the word read and expounded is also a means of grace. Meeting together for prayer and praise is another means. Are the children of God indifferent to these means? I meet the accusations of the enemy with a flat denial. They delight to hear the Word of God, and rejoice when it is fully proclaimed in the sanctuary. But they do not like the house of God to be turned into a den of thieves. They do not rejoice when God is robbed of His glory, and man exalted above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. Lift up Christ in His glorious fulness and the birds of heaven will lodge in His branches. The gospel of the grace of God never makes a believer indifferent. Did it ever make you careless or indifferent? Never! God forbid!! Now, let me show you what these doctrines do lead into. And those who say the contrary



know neither "the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. xxii. 29). Let us read the 2nd Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, the 11th and following verses. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us"—the children of God,—"that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." You see that the very Word of God gives the lie to all carnal accusations. A believer wishes to live like Christ. He wishes to have done with sin, and to live only in Him. He knows his standing is in Christ and he desires to be found blameless at His appearing. He rejoices that he is now a son of God, and having a good hope in Christ he would purify himself, even as He is pure.

A third objection is drawn from the *threatenings, warnings, cautions, and exhortations* contained in the Scriptures, and which are addressed to christians. Now, my friends, whoever built a wall at the top of a precipice that persons should fall over it and perish? Whoever put railings at the sides of a bridge that persons should fall off and be killed? But to illustrate this point somewhat familiarly. Sometime ago I was going along an old narrow road where there was not room for two conveyances to pass at the same time. After walking some distance I came to a certain place in the road which appeared somewhat dangerous, not because it was exceedingly narrow, but because there was a water-course at one side twelve or fifteen feet below the roadway. At this very spot there was a man at work fixing some rail-fencing. I asked him what he was doing. He said he was fixing the railing because it was a dangerous spot for conveyances to travel that way in dark nights. I said, has there been any one killed here? No, he said. What are you putting up this fencing for then? Is it that someone may fall over and be killed. The man looked at me with amazement! and then said, No! Cannot you see that this fencing is to prevent anybody being killed. Now this is just the use of the threatenings, warnings, and cautions of Scripture. They are the rail-fencing to prevent accidents, mishaps, and ruin. And pilgrims travelling the narrow way in dark nights shall not be overthrown and perish in the yawning depths beneath. The Lord is their keeper, and He will preserve them from all evil both by day and by night.

I shall now make two or three observations and conclude. "Oh! give us a practical sermon!" I receive messages of this sort sometimes, and then I give a few practical sermons. But I find persons do not like too many of this sort. The practical part of my sermon is this: Every person who is a regenerate child of God, and who is being preserved in grace to glory, is a *humble* soul. I say that every regenerate person is a humble soul. He sees no one lower than himself. He knows that there is no one worse than himself. He is abased in his own eyes. His hope is in "the Name of the Lord: for His Name alone is excellent" (Psalm cxlviii. 13). "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke xiv. 11).



Another mark of a child of God is this. He is a *praying* child. A child of God cannot live without prayer. I do not mean that he uses a form of words, although a form of words may be very useful to instruct us how to pray. But I mean the inward breathing of the soul after God in spiritual things. Each child making its request known to Him. "My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee." All God's eminent servants have been men of prayer. They have known their weakness and cried for help. "Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe." The Apostle exhorts to prayer, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit" (Ephesians vi. 18).

The saint of God is a *wrestling* person, whose wrestling is not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and with powers. He is no match for these in His own strength. He has to wrestle with the world, and the world is a great power, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. He has all this wicked world to contend with. But there is one power greater than this. What is it? That great monster, the devil. Do you think that you are a match for the devil? Do you think that you can wrestle with him? The devil will soon throw you, and bring you into difficulties if, unaided, you wrestle with him. He knows how to work upon poor corrupt human nature. A friend of mine said to me the other day, that the human heart is like a spring in a field, you may try to stop it in one place, but it will burst out in another with all the greater force. The wrestling and the conflict will continue to the very end. Finally victory will be with us because God is on our side.

The child of God is a *believer*, and lives by *faith*. Hence it is that he is "looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of his faith." He knows that he has no strength in himself. He knows that he has no fighting power of His own by which he can obtain victory. But he believes that God will give him abundant success through Jesus Christ. He believes that he will overcome every enemy, and enter in triumph into that kingdom which God has prepared for him. He glories in the words of the Apostle: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Amen and Amen!!

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# “GLORIFIED TOGETHER.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

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*In St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the 8th Chapter, the last words in the 17th Verse.*

“GLORIFIED TOGETHER.”

THE words of my text are spoken of the children of God. This we learn from the verses which go before. In the 14th verse they are declared to be the sons of God, and led by the Spirit of God. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” They are described in the 15th verse as not having “received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry ‘Abba, Father.’” The children of God are such by adoption. This is the Father’s act. He hath “predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians i. 5). We are described as being in close union with the Lord Jesus in the 17th verse. The Holy Ghost is the Person Who reveals to us that God the Father has adopted us, and the outcome of this is that we cry unto God in return, “Abba, Father.” The Holy Ghost is the Divine witness in the hearts of all believers. Hence in the 16th verse it is said: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit.” To what fact? To this: “that we are the children of God.” The Apostle then proceeds to shew that

heirship arises from sonship: "And if children of God, then heirs." We are heirs because we are children. We do not become children because we are heirs, but heirs because we are children. "Heirs of God." What a wonderful idea is contained in these words. It would be utterly impossible for us to analyze them fully, for when God gives a man Christ, He gives with Him all good things both for this life and for that which is to come (Romans viii. 32). "Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Christ is the natural Son, and the appointed heir of all things. We, by virtue of union with Him, our Elder Brother, are joint heirs with Him. The time state of believers is one of suffering. "If so be that we suffer with Him." Suffering is a legacy which our Lord has left to His Church. It is not that every member of the Church suffers to the same extent. Some members of the Church have much more affliction and trial and suffering than others. But each believer will have sufficient to make it manifest that he is a child of God. The contrast in the latter part of this 17th verse is between the suffering time state of the children of God, and their hereafter being "glorified together" with Christ. The Apostle speaks thus in the 18th verse: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time,"—and there are many and great sufferings connected with the body in "this present time," but when they are all summed up together they—"are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," and to us, and openly put upon us. For a little while we suffer with Him, that we may reign with Him. "Beloved, rejoice! inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy." For a little while we are dying daily, but soon we shall shine in the beauty and glory of Him Who is King of kings and Lord of lords. This leads me to the text. We shall now proceed to consider the words which we have chosen—"glorified together."

*First, what is implied in this word "together?" Secondly, what is it to be "glorified together" with Him? And, thirdly, are there degrees in glory?*

Some of you have already returned answers to yourselves upon each of these points. We shall now endeavour to bring before you such answers as we find recorded in the Scriptures.

*First then, what is implied in this word together?* There is only one word in the original for "glorified together," yet it is a compound one. We shall treat them separately in order to bring out some of the ideas which are contained in them. This word "together" often occurs in the Scriptures. We read, in St. Matthew's Gospel, the 19th chapter, the marriage union spoken of thus: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (verse 6). God has joined Christ and His children together, and no one can put them asunder. I read again in the 18th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and the 20th verse, that wherever "two or three are gathered together," there the Lord is in the midst of them. This is a united prayer meeting; the Lord Himself being the leader of it. When the children of God are agreed together touching anything that they shall ask, the Father will do it for them.

And then there is a rejoicing *together*. I read in the 15th chapter of St. Luke's Gospel of the sheep that was lost being found by the good Shepherd. He went after it, He found it, He laid it upon His shoulders rejoicing, and brought it home; it could not walk, but He carried it home. And then the friends and the neighbours were called together, and He said, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." We see the beautiful application of this made by our Lord Himself. "I say unto you, likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who"—have no need of, or—"need no repentance." There will be a meeting together in heaven as verily as there is a meeting together of the saints here upon earth. Then there will be rejoicing together. But there is an idea connected with this word "*together*" which I wish to propound to you somewhat more prominently, as it brings out that union which exists between Christ and His Church. This will then prepare the way for what we shall say upon the word "*glorified*." I turn to the 6th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and I read that "if we have been planted *together* in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." And in the 8th verse: "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (verses 8 to 11). We learn, then, from these words what I shall prove from another Scripture shortly: that there is a *dying together* with Christ, a *burial together* with Him, and a *rising together* with Him. Take another Scripture from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, the 2nd chapter and the 5th verse: "He hath quickened us *together* with Christ." The 6th verse: "He hath raised us up *together*" with Christ. And "He hath made us sit *together* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus" (verse 7). Examine these words, and you will see the union of the Church with Christ. Believers were always in Him. When He was upon the earth they lived in Him and died in Him as their Head and representative. They have been quickened together with Him, they have ascended in Him, and are now sitting together at God's right hand in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. Wonderful union is implied in this word "*together!*" Consider the counsel which the Apostle gives the Colossians: "If ye then be *risen with* Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is *hid with* Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear *with Him* in glory" (iii. 1-4). But I find that this union between Christian believers is also spoken of in connection with the Trinity, and with each member of the one family. In the latter part of the 2nd chapter to the Ephesians, you read in the 19th verse: "therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners." They



were once strangers and foreigners to Christ whilst in their natural state, but now they are no more strangers and foreigners to Him, "but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone." Who is the architect of this building? Surely not man, but God, our Covenant God. Who is the foundation of this building? There is but One Foundation, and that is Jesus Christ. Who fits and frames every stone that is placed upon the Foundation? The Holy Ghost. Now read: "In Whom all the building fitly framed *together*." Look at this, there is no mishap in this building, no failure. Every stone is put into its proper place, and being fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: "in Whom,"—or on Whom, the Lord Jesus Christ, "ye also,"—speaking to the Ephesian Christians,—"*are builded together*." For what purpose? "For a habitation of God through the Spirit" (verse 19 to 22). Hence this temple, this household of faith, is the dwelling place of God Almighty. Wonderful! I will pray the Father, and He will come unto you, and make His abode with you. And I will come unto you, and make My abode with you. And I will send the Spirit, and He shall come unto you, and make His abode with you (John xiv. 16 and 23). Observe the expressions which bring out the grand idea that the Church of God is fitly framed together according to the Divine Architect's plan; that it is built upon the One Foundation, Christ Jesus, and that it is dwelt in by the Holy Ghost. The children of God are all "*knit together* in love" (Colossians ii. 2). Yes, by the love of a Triune Jehovah—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Believers are "with one mind to strive *together* for the faith of the Gospel" (Phil. i. 27). Dwell upon the word "*together*" and consider well the idea of union which it conveys.

But you are aware that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming again in a short time to receive His Church unto Himself. The Apostle speaks of this in his 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians, the 2nd chapter, and the 1st verse: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our *gathering together* unto Him." You have some light thrown upon this verse when you turn to the 4th chapter of his 1st Epistle, the 16th and 17th verses. When "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first"—And His own that are living upon the earth being changed, "shall be *caught up together* with them in the clouds: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." *Together with the Lord!* "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." And are they not comforting and encouraging words in this time state? The children of God may appear separated from a visible Christ and from each other for a while, but the Lord will come for His chosen ones and receive them unto Himself, that where He is, there they shall be also, and that too for ever and ever. Now these things are all tied together, from first to last by the Lord Himself. Persons, though they are the children of God, may have their slips, and their failings, but these will not frustrate the end that God has in view. Do you believe this, beloved? If so, look at this

8th chapter to the Romans, and read the 29th and 30th verses. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate." Foreknowledge and predestination go together; and He determined that they should be "conformed to the image of His Son," inwardly and outwardly, that our Lord Jesus Christ "might be the Firstborn among many brethren." "Moreover whom He did predestinate,"—and every child of God is predestinated,—“them He also called,” by His Word and Spirit working in due time. "And whom He called," by the Word and the Spirit thus, "them He also justified," "freely by His grace" (Rom. iii. 24) in the Blood of Christ, and by His Spirit. "And whom He justified, them He also glorified." There is no slip, you see, neither is there a link missing. He has tied everything together by a sovereign hand in order that there may be no failure in His church. From first to last all shall be well. God is working out everything after the counsel of His own Will for the good of His little flock. Now read the 28th verse. "And we know." Who do? Why, the children of God know—those who have been spiritually taught; they know "that all things *work together* for good." All cross purposes are working together. A wonderful thing, is it not, to think that everything—even our meeting together to-night—is working out a part of Jehovah's great plan. "All things are working together for good." But to whom? "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." You see, then, how that all things are working together in order that the whole Church of God may in due time be "*glorified together*" with Christ. All the children of God who are now scattered abroad have to be *gathered together in Christ* (John xi. 52). Can we grasp the idea contained in the following words? "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might *gather together in one* all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him" (Eph. i. 10). Wonderful thought! Together with Christ. And then to behold His glory. The glory of Jehovah Jesus.

*We shall now proceed to consider our Second Head, which is this: "glorified together."* What is it to be "*glorified*"? We sometimes give definitions; but definitions we do not very much admire, because there are always so many exceptions to be made. But what we fail to give you in the way of a definition we shall try to supply in the way of illustration. What we mean by being "*glorified together*," with Christ, is being adorned and beautified with His graces and gifts here upon earth, and hereafter being made like Him, so as to enjoy His personal presence, happiness, and blessedness for evermore. This, you will say, is a very comprehensive definition. It is so designedly! Now, it is sometimes a difficult thing to get a glimpse of the meaning of being "*glorified together*" with Christ. He prayed for His disciples that they might behold His glory. His prayer will be answered. I may fail to give any adequate idea of the glorification of the saints; but the fact remains that they shall be like Christ and "*glorified together*" with Him. We have a miniature picture of future glory shewn us on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mat. xvii). "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a

high mountain apart." The Lord often takes His disciples apart for He has got something to say to them which He does not wish the rest of mankind to hear. He also shews His chosen glorious things which He does not shew to others. He has the right to do so. He took three and shewed them His glory. Read the 2nd verse: "He was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." There were two of the Old Testament prophets present, and the three already named, thus uniting the Old and New Testament Saints together. And some were beside themselves, so great was the glory manifested in Jesus. They were afraid, and could not tell what to say. When Peter describes this, in the 1st chapter of his 2nd Epistle, he says: "We were eye-witnesses of His Majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, 'This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.' And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with Him in the holy mount" (verses 16 to 18). What a glorious sight that would be! No wonder the Apostles should feel perplexed, and scarcely know either what to say, or what to do. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (I John iii. 2). This will be sufficient, to "be like Him." The word "*like*" brings out the idea which I wish to convey to you—*like Him*. Is not our citizenship in heaven? "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," And when He comes, He "shall change our vile bodies, that they may be like unto His glorious Body"; and this will He do "according to the mighty working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 20, 21). All things shall be subdued unto Him, sin, and Satan, and the world will be put under His and their feet, and then they shall be like Him. Oh! what a glorious prospect have the children of God! The Lord will come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.

But the Saints have a foretaste of future glory. Hear the words of St. Peter: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and *full of glory*: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (II Peter i. 8-9). This is an experimental revelation of the glory of Christ to the soul now. Hence St. Paul could say to the Colossians "Christ is in you." And He was in them as their hope of future glory. Christ is glorified in the believer now. A glorified Christ the believer enjoys. He can re-echo the words of the Psalmist: "God is my exceeding joy." Our Lord said to His sorrowing disciples: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John xvi. 22). We do not always behold the glory of Christ. Often clouds and darkness come in between, but when these are removed, then we see and enjoy Him Who is the "altogether lovely," and the "chiefest among ten thousand" (Solomon's Song v. 16, 10). "Glorified together." We are joined together with the Lord now. We are rejoicing in the Lord whilst we are here upon earth, a pledge and

foretaste of the joying and rejoicing together with Him hereafter in glory. We have the assurance which the Spirit gives in our souls: "Joy, and peace, and love, and gentleness, and meekness, and faith": (Gal. v. 22, 23). And no one can bring any charge against these holy fruits. They are the very perfection of beauty implanted within, so that, as in the 45th Psalm, it can be said, that "she"—the Church,—“is all glorious within” (verse 13) with that beauty and glory which her glorified Lord has revealed in her.

But beloved, in our time state we are warriors. We have to fight the good fight of faith. We have to strive against sin, and a wicked world, and Satan, and indwelling corruption. This terrible conflict is always going on whilst we are here. Now let us just look into this for a moment or two. Will there be any one of these on the other side,—in our glorified state with Christ? What do you think will have become of sin? I mean sin as it now exists in the Church of God. What will have become of it then? It will be no more. Sin cannot be felt by the child of God in heaven. He will have done with this enemy. What will have become of the wicked world? It will be shut out from heaven. You will not be troubled with this enemy any more. Where will Satan be then? Surely not in Heaven? He will be shut out. These and many other enemies with which we have had to contend will be bruised under our feet. We shall be “glorified together” with the Lord. How blessed to contemplate that we shall be perfectly freed from sin, its temptation, and power—perfectly freed from a wicked world and a corrupt heart—perfectly freed from Satan and his fiery darts, for he will not be allowed to shoot an arrow there. It will indeed be perfect happiness and joy in the Lord. Complete in His righteousness—glorious in His holiness—knowing Him even as we are known of Him—enjoying perpetual communion with the King of Kings as “we shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of our Father.”

We shall now notice some of those Scriptures which bring before us the glorious and happy state of the saints in Heaven. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: ‘yea,’ saith the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labours’” (Revelation xiv. 13). The state of the blessed dead is a glorious and happy resting state. This is that rest which Abraham looked forward to. He had no abiding city here upon earth, but he looked for one to come “which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews xi. 10). What city is that? I think it is described in the 21st chapter of the Revelation. There is the city, but St. John says, that “he saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” The children of God shall walk in the light and glory of this city, which is the light and glory of their Lord. The Spirits of just men shall be made perfect, and this perfection, light, and glory are all in Christ. The state of those in glory is spoken of as Paradise. St. Paul speaks of this Paradise, as having been caught up into it. “How that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words,”—things “which it is not lawful



for a man to utter,"—he could not reveal them upon earth (II Cor. xii. 4). Paul wished to remain in this state always. The Lord had service for him upon earth. He wished to have done with in-dwelling sin, "the thorn in the flesh," for which he besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him. The Lord answered his prayers, but not in the way he wanted, yet in the best way—Grace during the conflict and glory at the end of it. Is not this sufficient? The Lord said to Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul was satisfied: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ," the grace of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, "may rest upon me" (verse 9). This Paradise of which we are speaking is that into which the penitent thief was received by our Lord and Saviour. We have heard a great many opinions about the Paradise into which the thief entered. That which seems to be the common-sense view of the passage is this: The thief said: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." But who had taught him that Christ had a kingdom? It is the Spirit's work to unfold Christ and His kingdom to sinners, and this He did to the thief. Now what did Christ say unto him? "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 42, 43). And so he was. He was together with his Lord that day in the kingdom of glory, and will remain there for ever. Some try to make out a purgatory, or some sort of a middle state for purifying sinners, from this passage. This strikes me as priestcraft, and you may rely upon it, that if there were no pence there would be no purgatory; no pay, no priest. Others will have it, that there is some sort of a *middle place* which is called "*unknown*." This may do for heathen, but not for Christians: "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." The glorious state of the saints hereafter is described as Abraham's bosom. Lazarus was carried into Abraham's bosom. The bosom denotes the comfort and happiness which the saints have in glory. Sometimes the future state of the saints is spoken of as a kingdom which God has prepared from the foundation of the world, a kingdom which cannot be shaken, a kingdom into which believers enter like a ship in full sail, the kingdom which is the Father's gracious gift to the little flock, and in which they shall appear as kings and priests unto God for ever. The Saints will wear crowns in their glorious state. We are speaking figuratively; there are three crowns which are prominently brought out in the Scriptures for God's children. The Apostle James speaks of "the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him"—promised to His children (James i. 12). This is the crown of everlasting life: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation ii. 10). Then there is the crown of righteousness which Paul looked forward to. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (II Timothy iv. 8). Then there is a crown of glory. "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (I Peter v. 4). This is

the triple crown of the saints. Will such crowning as this do for you? Will being like Christ and sitting with Him upon His throne do for the troubled and tried children of God when they have finished their course here upon earth? Will it? Oh! my beloved brethren, this is the very thing that delights the hearts of the children of God. They are looking forward to being glorified together with Christ. With St. Paul they can say: "For we reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," who are the children of God. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians iv. 17, 18). Our Lord told His disciples that in His Father's house there are "many mansions" (John xiv. 1). In the presence of our Divine Lord in heaven there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psalms xvi. 11). We understand to some extent the feeling of the Apostle when he said: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He had a desire "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." "Absent from the body, and we shall be present with the Lord." Is not this the better country? The country of peace, and rest, and joy, and glory *in* and *with* the Lord for ever and ever. What shall our prayer be? "Lord guide *Thou* me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory; for whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee."

I shall now proceed to consider our *third point*, because it is a question upon which some of you may feel interested; and it is just possible that you would like to hear what I have got to say upon it. I am not about to dictate to you. I may differ from some very excellent Christians. However, I will give you my own views, supporting them by the Scriptures, and then you must weigh them for yourselves.

*The question is this: Are there degrees in glory?* Some think that there are, and they are of opinion that by their good works they may rise to higher degrees in glory. Those who believe in degrees in glory are not backward to quote certain Scriptures in defence of their views. I will mention some passages which are referred to for this purpose. The first is in the Book of the Prophet Daniel, the 12th chapter, the 2nd and 3rd verses: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." There is a resurrection spoken of here. Then the next verse is the one upon which great stress is laid: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Well, I am rather dull in some things, and I am unable to see how they can build up an argument from these words for degrees in glory. Those that I have read upon this verse have not put their views very clearly, and until they do so, I shall pass them over. "This is not a fair way," you will say, "of dealing with those who differ from you." But I have

no alternative, seeing I do not fully understand what they mean. I can scarcely be blamed for not attempting to refute sayings which I do not clearly comprehend.

Again, in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel there is the parable of the talents. The man travelling into a far country, gives to one servant five talents; to another, two; and to another, one. Now observe:—*five*, and *two*, and *one*. "Are there not degrees here?" Well, five differs from two, and two from five, and one from both. What do you make out of this? Well, what has this to do with the future? I do not profess to understand this parable perfectly. I have read several writers upon it. I shall only point out one or two little facts connected with it. One had received five talents, and made other five; and the second who had received two gained two more. Now listen to what is said to each of them. In the 21st verse we read:—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." He says also to the second, who had two talents and made other two, in the 23rd verse: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Why! he says just the same thing to both of them. He should have said according to the reasoning of some: "Now, thou who hast made five talents, with the five talents which I gave thee, take a higher place in the joy of thy lord." And to the one who had made only two talents with the two talents which he had received, He should have said to him, "Take a lower place in the joy of thy lord." Now, it so happens, that he said the same to both of them. The parable to my mind goes thoroughly against degrees in glory. The other servant who had but one talent does not touch the question of degrees in glory. It is a sad, dark picture, and we shall pass it over.

I shall now give you the parable of the labourers as a set off on the other side. In the 20th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel you read that a certain husbandman "went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour,"—and about the sixth hour, and about the ninth hour, and finally about the eleventh hour, and did likewise. Well, what comes of all this? Did those persons who were hired early in the morning receive more than the rest? or more than he who was hired at the eleventh hour? No! they all received alike. Every man his penny. The first and the last stand on the same terms before the Lord. He has a right to do what He will with His own. Now, what was the penny? I think it was the sovereign penny of free grace which God gives to whom He pleases. He shows His sovereignty in the parable. He has a right to call persons out of the market place of this world, and to send them into His vineyard to labour, whenever He pleases. If He gives the free grace penny, it is an earnest of eternal glory. Blessed are all they who have received the penny. It is grace now and glory hereafter. Lord help us to bow before Thee and magnify the riches of Thy grace.

There is another passage quoted in favour of degrees in glory from

St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, the 15th chapter. There is an account given us of the two Adams ; the first Adam and his posterity, the second Adam, which is Jesus Christ, and His posterity. In the 40th verse it is said : " There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead " (verses 40 to 42). Now they reason from this that as the sun, moon, and stars differ in glory, so also will Christians differ in glory when they get to heaven. I do not see it so. Some interpret the passage thus : By the sun is meant the Lord Jesus Christ. True, He is the " Sun of Righteousness." By the moon is meant the Church, a beautiful idea—" fair as the moon." And by the stars some understand believers generally. Now, there is truth in all this, and beautiful truth too, but I do not think that this is the reasoning and meaning of the Apostle. What then does he mean ? Examine the passages carefully. The sun has his own peculiar glory ; the moon has her own peculiar glory ; and each star has its own peculiar glory. Now, what is the Apostle contrasting in this chapter ? Is it not our time state of humiliation with our glorious state of exaltation in the resurrection morning ? What does he say about our state of humiliation ? " It is sown in corruption ; " " It is sown in dishonour ; " " It is sown in weakness ; " " It is sown a natural body." This is what is said of the state of humiliation. Now, what is said of the state of exaltation and glory ? " It is raised in incorruption ; " " It is raised in glory ; " " It is raised in power ; " " It is raised a spiritual body." This refers to the whole Church of God. When the Lord comes, He will change the fashion of our body of humiliation to be conformed to His body of glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subject also all things unto Him. The entire Church of God will awake out of dust robed in the glory of her ascended Lord. The Church shall be *like* Her Glorious Lord.

Allow me to state to you, before I conclude, in a summary of reasons, why I do not accept the views of those who believe in degrees in glory. Now, if any of you differ from me do not write me letters to tell me so. You are quite welcome to your own views, and I am not here as a Pope among you to say what you are to believe. Now take a few thoughts by way of summary upon this subject. All God's children have been *loved alike* from everlasting to everlasting. All God's children have been *chosen alike* in Christ, and *blessed alike* in Him. All God's children have been *redeemed alike* with the precious blood of the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. All God's children have been *justified alike* by His grace. All God's children have been *called alike* by the Holy Ghost, being quickened by Him. I mean that all have been, are, or will be called and quickened by the Holy Ghost. Not one will be left behind. All God's children are *preserved alike* in Christ unto His coming. All are *sanctified alike*. All are to have *bodies alike*. All are to *enter alike* into the same happiness and glory. All are to be *filled alike* with joy and pleasures for evermore. I have given you these



reasons in a summary. I might give you more. You will see that I have some ground for not accepting the teaching of those who are in favour of "degrees in glory."

Beloved, it will be enough for me to be, as my text says "glorified together" with Christ:—a glorified soul, a glorified spirit, and a glorified body. What more do I want? and what more could I desire? Lord fill me with Thyself and make me like unto Thee, and this will suffice a worthless sinner saved by grace divine. God forbid that any man should glory in man. Let him who glories, glory in the Lord who has made over to us all things. All things are ours. And we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Wonder of wonders! All blessings together with Christ are mine, and I am His for evermore. O God, help us to praise and magnify Him with whom we shall be "GLORIFIED TOGETHER." Amen and Amen!!

May the grace of Christ our Saviour,  
 And the Father's boundless love,  
 With the Holy Spirit's favour,  
 Rest upon us from above.  
 Thus may we abide in union.  
 With each other and the Lord.  
 And possess, in sweet communion,  
 Joys which earth cannot afford.

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# “COME YE TO THE WATERS.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, JULY 4TH, 1878.

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*In the 55th Chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, and at the 1st verse, you will read:—*

“HO, EVERY ONE THAT THIRSTETH, COME YE TO THE WATERS; AND HE THAT HATH NO MONEY; COME YE, BUY, AND EAT, YEA, COME, BUY WINE AND MILK WITHOUT MONEY AND WITHOUT PRICE.”

OUR text is one of the most gracious invitations contained in the Word of God. It is comprehensive as regards the persons invited—“*every one* that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money”—these are the moneyless ones,—“come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Here we have freeness and fulness as regards the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the 2nd verse we have an expostulation: “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not”? In the 3rd verse we have excellent counsel given by the Lord: “Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live.” Is not this

admirable and wholesome advice? In the next part of the verse we have a very gracious promise: "And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." This is the covenant which is "ordered in all things and sure" (II Samuel xxiii. 5). When a man is brought by the Holy Ghost out of darkness into marvellous light, then it is that the *secret* of this covenant is revealed to him. He is a wise man who is in possession of this secret. Jehovah Father makes this covenant with the Head—Christ—for all His members, and then in regeneration He reveals it to them. He says, I will make an everlasting covenant with *you*—with Christ and His Church. The nature of this covenant is grace, the *sure mercies* of David, who is our beloved Saviour. In the next verse we have Christ spoken of as the gift of God for "a Witness to the people, and a Leader and Commander to the people." The Gentiles seem to me to be meant in the next verse, as being called into the fold of Christ. "Behold, Thou shalt call a nation that Thou knowest not, and nations that knew not Thee shall run unto Thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel: for He hath glorified Thee." You must bear in mind that it is the people of God who are spoken of in this chapter. These are the *ye*, the *thirsty*, and the *penniless*. I shall not go further in this chapter. I have taken up these parts just to shew you the connection of our text. There is one word at the opening of the verse that we must make a passing remark upon. It is this: "Ho." With the grammarians it is styled an interjection. It is used nearly fifty times in the Old Testament, but not often as it is used in our text. Generally, though not always, it is translated "*Woe*." And so we find it in this book of Isaiah. It is the language of threatening judgment or denunciation. "*Woe* unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed" (Isaiah x. 1). Again, "*Woe* to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim" (Isaiah xxviii. 1). Again: "*Woe* to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt" (Isaiah xxix. 1). And again: "*Woe* to the rebellious children, saith the Lord" (Isaiah xxx. 1). "*Woe* to them that go down to Egypt for help: and stay on horses, and trust in chariots" (Isaiah xxxi. 1). "*Woe* to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee" (Isa. xxxiii. 1). And so we might go on. The passages which I have read for you, give this translation of the original word—"woe." You see that it implies threatening and denunciation in each case. You have the same use of a word in the New Testament. In the 23rd chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, our Lord, no fewer than eight times, denounces the Scribes and Pharisees, saying: "*Woe* unto you Scribes and Pharisees." And then He points out their particular sins and transgressions, for which He denounces them. Our text gives us another translation of the original word, and in a sense which is gracious, kind, and affectionate. It is the language of sympathy with, and of pity towards, those that are in distress, misery, and poverty. "*Ho*, every one that *thirsteth*."

*This leads me to a consideration of our text: First, the condition of the*

persons described: "Every one that thirsteth, and he that hath no money, without money and without price." Secondly, the invitation: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," "come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

Here then we have two divisions under which we purpose, through God's assistance, to bring out the whole subject as far as we are able. Perhaps it may strike some of you that it is scarcely worth while taking up our text, for when we read it, it is so simple and so easy that every one can understand it. I hardly know a passage in the whole Bible which is more erroneously quoted, and more erroneously applied.

I shall therefore proceed, though not in a controversial spirit, to consider—*first, the condition of the persons spoken of in our text.* "Every one that thirsteth." "All the world is athirst," say some persons. But this is a very bad thirst as a rule. It is a thirst after evil, and a thirst for self-gratification, and a thirst for the distinctions and honours of this life, and a thirst for what the Apostle styles "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," all of which are of the world, and not of the Father. The thirst of which I am about to speak is a very different thirst from this. It is a thirst which God the Holy Ghost produces in a man, and a thirst which no man on earth can produce in himself, nor has he any natural desire to do so. Let me try to show you what this thirst is. I turn to the 42nd Psalm and I read these words:—"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so *panteth* my soul after Thee, O God. My soul *thirsteth* for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Now what sort of thirst was this? Was this a worldly thirst, or a carnal thirst? or, was it the thirst of a living child in whom the Spirit of God dwelt, creating a thirst for a drink of the living water which comes from God Himself? He cries in the 63rd Psalm thus: "O God, Thou art *my* God; early will I seek Thee." Here is covenant relationship. "Early will I seek *Thee*; my soul *thirsteth* for *Thee*, my flesh *longeth* for *Thee* in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is" (verse 1). The world affords no water to quench the thirst of the child of God. David wanted "to see God's power and God's glory, so as he had seen Him in the sanctuary." This will quench his thirst and his longings: "because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee" (verses 2 and 3). Beloved of the Lord, this is the way the Word of God speaks when thirsty souls are addressed. I read also in the 107th Psalm these words: "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. *Hungry* and *thirsty*, their soul fainted in them." And what then? "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses" (verses 4 to 6). Show me the persons that are thus athirst after God, after the living water, after Jesus Christ, after His righteousness, after His Spirit, after the teaching of His Word; and then I will show you the character that agrees with the description in my text: "Every one that *thirsteth*."

Now, there are rich and precious *promises* in God's Word to those who are athirst. In the 44th chapter of this very Book, we read in the



3rd and 4th verses : "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." This is explained for us in the next part of the verse, that by water is meant the Spirit of God, and by the floods the blessing of God. "I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring." And the effect shall be this : "And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." This is the result of the outpouring of the Spirit and grace of God on His children. This is what I understand our Lord to mean in that celebrated discourse of His upon the mount : "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness ; for they shall be filled" (Matthew vi.). The hungry soul shall be filled and satisfied with the bread of heaven, and the thirsty soul shall drink of the water of life and live for ever. I like the words which are contained in the 35th chapter of Isaiah : "For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water ; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes" (verse 7). The fallen state of man is here described, and the grace of God coming in upon him is also set forth, and the effect is fruitfulness to the praise of God. Here then are precious promises in God's Word made to thirsty souls. I need not say to you that I am speaking of spiritual things. Hear the words of Him who says of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is *athirst* of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Rev. xxi. 6).

But our text brings out the condition of these persons still further. It says : "*he that hath no money*," the moneyless creature. This is a figurative expression like the former. Does it mean the money of this world? or does it mean the money of a person's own goodness, and righteousness? "*He that hath no money*,"—"he that is without money and without price." Let us look at this. Do you think that you can find any familiar illustration recorded in God's Word? I think there is such a character given in the New Testament, and I will refer to it as an example. In the 7th chapter of St. Luke's Gospel we read of a certain woman, who is described as a sinner. When she knew that the Lord was in Simon's house, she "brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His Feet behind Him weeping, and she began to wash His Feet with tears and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His Feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee"—yes, when the Pharisee who thought he had got plenty of money of his own, self importance, supposed goodness and righteousness—saw what took place, "he spake within himself, saying: 'This Man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him : for she is a sinner.'" Just the sort the Lord wants, "*a sinner*." Persons do not like to be told pointedly that they are sinners. They like to hear it in the general ; yes, we are *all* sinners. But here is a woman who was a sinner, and a great sinner. Jesus knew what was going on in Simon's mind, and He said to him : "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.

And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors : the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay,"—oh ! this is it, nothing to pay ! Nothing to pay ! I dare say that most of you have read a little tract, "Nothing to pay" ? it is well worth reading,—“When they had nothing to pay” when they had no money, and no price to offer—what then ? graciously, and in a sovereign way, “he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, Simon, which of them will love him most ? Simon answered, and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.” Thou hast answered quite right, Simon. Now, look at this *woman*, Simon. I came into thine house, thou didst not pay me the common civilities of the country, but this woman, ever since I came in, “has washed My Feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss, but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My Feet.” Now, Simon, look at her. “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, therefore she loved much,” and shewed it. He could not say so to Simon. He was not penniless, or moneyless, or without price. He had got something of his own, and despised those who were poor bankrupt sinners. There are many Simons now. Jesus then turns to the woman, and says to her : “Woman, thy sins are forgiven :” “Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.” This astonished all who heard it. And what do you think would be the effect upon that poor woman’s heart. This case represents a thirsty sinner, a moneyless sinner, one who has no price to present or offer unto God. She answers to the description of my text when it is said : “without money and without price.” We read of several others of the same class in God’s Word. Indeed all God’s quickened children have been reduced to this condition. Job was one of this class. “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job xlii. 5, 6). Job could only answer the Lord by saying, “Behold I am vile ; what shall I answer Thee ? I will lay my hand upon my mouth” (Job xl. 4). This is the position of the sinner before God. Isaiah was another of the same class, for when he saw the Lord, “the King in His beauty” and glory, he cried : “Woe is me ! for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts” (Isaiah vi. 5). He had no money, he was without price, he had nothing to commend himself to God. Daniel, when he speaks in his 10th chapter, tells us that he was one of these. He saw the Lord, and he says “there remained no strength in me : for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength” (8th verse). His strength and beauty were taken out of him, and there was neither power nor comeliness left in him. I should be rejoiced in my soul to hear that every one in this congregation answered to the description of the condition of those of whom we have spoken. A person must be stripped of every thing of his own or he will never want a Saviour. He must be moneyless and penniless for only those “without money and without

price" will ever thirst for the living water which flows from the fountain of the living God. O Lord open the Rock that the waters may gush out, and run in the dry places of our souls like a river! (Psalm cv. 41).

*I shall proceed to consider our second head.* "Come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Now look at the various things that are mentioned in this verse. You have *water*; *bread* or *food* is implied in the words used—"buy and eat"; *wine* and *milk*. Here are four things: Waters to quench the thirst. Bread to strengthen man's heart. Wine to cheer and revive, and you have milk to nourish and support. True these are figurative expressions. Still they afford us a great deal for thoughtful consideration and comfort. There is also the invitation itself, "*come ye*," which is repeated three times in our text. The Lord deals most graciously and affectionately with those who are in need and necessity.

What are these *waters*? Some regard them as ordinances or the means of grace. We are not of those who despise ordinances, such as meeting together in the house of the Lord, the reading of His Word, and whatever else He may have commanded us to observe. God forbid we should. But, after all, there is something better than outward ordinances, something which will abide when all ordinances will have disappeared for ever. Beloved, what are these waters? I regard them as the waters of free grace which God sends down to us through Jesus Christ our Lord, and which come into our souls by the power of the Holy Ghost. Let us see how we can make this plain to you. The waters of free grace, or the Gospel waters are often spoken of in the Scriptures. There is one portion I shall have to run upon a little which describes these waters. It is in the 47th chapter of Ezekiel, and there you read the *source* of these waters. Let us notice a few things: "Afterwards He brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar" (verse 1). Then in the latter part of the 2nd verse we read the waters ran out on the *right side*. They always do. This is the source. There is considerable light thrown upon these verses when we turn to the 22nd chapter of the Book of Revelation, and the 1st verse. The Lord shewed John "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." This water went down into the Church, for you know "there is a river," the river of God's free grace, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Psalm xlvii. 4). The stream of electing love, the stream of redeeming blood, the stream of quickening grace, the streams as revealed in the Gospel; these are all supplied from the overflowing fountain, and gladden the Church of God. Let us return to Ezekiel. These waters were measured, "And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again

he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters ; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through ; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand ; and it was a river that I could not pass over : for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over " (verses 1 to 5). These are the waters of the Gospel, the waters of free grace. These waters were to the ankles. There are some who never appear more than ankle deep in these waters. The ankle-deep Christians are the babes in Christ. It is a good thing for them that they are in the waters at all. There are some who profess the name of Christ, but yet their feet have never touched the waters. There are those who are knee-deep in the Gospel waters of free grace ; these are the children. Others are up to their loins ; these are the strong young men in Christ. And then you have others who have cleared the bottom ; for they are swimming in these waters, as a token of their swimming in the ocean of God's love for ever in heaven. You know how John speaks of the experience of Christians. Some are babes, and others are children, some are young men, and others are fathers in Christ (I John ii. 12). Again, when these Gospel waters rise to the ankles, believers are strengthened and are able to walk in Christ Jesus. Persons with weak ankles cannot walk well. The children of God have their ankles strengthened by the waters of free grace being applied to them. When these holy waters rise to the knees, then it is the believer bends in prayer before his God. " Confirm the feeble knees." The waters rise to the loins, then the heart and the affections ascend to things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Lord, enable me to swim in the ocean of free grace. Fill me with the fulness of *Thyself*. We read a little further on in this chapter that these waters issued towards the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea the waters shall be *healed*. When these waters come into our souls, they bring with them a healing virtue. They heal all our diseases. These waters bring with them not only healing, but *life*. " And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the waters shall come, shall live : and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither : for they shall be healed ; and everything shall live whither the river cometh." There are no dead fish in this river. The sea is great, and the fish are exceeding many. Believers are also likened unto trees for *fruitfulness*. They shall be like trees planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth their fruit in due season, their leaf shall not wither ; and whatsoever they do shall prosper (Psalm i). The water gets to the roots of these trees of God's planting, and fruitfulness is the effect. Job said, " My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand " (Job xxix. 19, 20). There is suggested to us by these waters the great love and mercy of God. Their *quantity* is as a sea or an ocean. Who can measure their height and depth, thier length and breadth ? It is utterly impossible. They are high as heaven, what



canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. We shall now understand, to some extent, what St. Paul felt when he wrote of the love of Christ which is beyond the experience of the creature. The breadth of Christ's love covers completely the sinner's sins and all of them. The length of His love extends to the ends of the earth wherever there is a sinner to be saved. The depth of His love gets down to the sinner in his lowest and most lost condition. The height of His love raises a sinner to heaven. God grant that we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God (Ephesians iii). These Gospel waters are of an excellent *quality*. They are not filled with mud and defilement, but are clear and pure, the very water of life. The woman of Samaria was led to thirst after this water of life. When the Lord Jesus Christ gave her this water, it bubbled up within, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. When this water of eternal life bubbles up within a person he is saved, and there is soon an outflow unto God in the way of thanksgiving and praise. We then understand something of the language which our Lord used upon the great day of the feast. It was a custom among the Jews to fetch a vessel of water from the pool of Siloam, and mixing some wine therewith, the priest poured the same upon the sacrifice which was upon the altar. Whilst this ceremony was going on our Lord seems to have been standing near, and cried out, saying, "If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me, and drink" (John vii. 37, 38). He would give him the pure water of eternal life. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 14). "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This Jesus spake of the Holy Ghost. It is so, beloved, that when we are made partakers of the graces of the Spirit, our hearts overflow in gratitude and praise to the God of all grace. O Lord fill our hearts with "living waters," and then open our lips, and our mouth shall shew forth Thy praise.

Let us look again at our text. "*Buy and eat.*" What? Bread. "Buy." But a man has to part with everything who buys this bread. He buys it at a dear rate. It is one of the most difficult things I know to get rid of our own riches, and of self-righteousness, and of self-importance, and of supposed self-goodness. We read of a certain person, in the 10th chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, who came to our Lord. He said to Him: "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life" (verse 17). Our Lord said: "Well, thou knowest the commandments, keep them: thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet, defraud not, and honour thy father and mother." And he answered: "All these have I kept from my youth." Do you think he had? He had observed them in the letter, or he thought he had done so. He was a very exact sort of moral man no doubt. It is said

the Lord *loved him*. And I am of opinion that the poor creature went to heaven after all. He would have to sell all he had first. "Jesus said unto him, *one thing* thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved ; for he had great possessions." Many make great profession of religion, but try them by this standard, and they will soon go away. But spiritually considered, a person must sell or part with all his self-righteousness and everything of his own to which he is looking for acceptance before God. A man may say : " I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and yet he knows not that he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." He has to sell off all, and become a *bankrupt*, before he will " buy of Christ gold tried in the fire, that he may be truly rich, and white raiment that he may appear " in the presence of the King. But our text speaks not only of *buying* but *eating*. What is the *bread* or food which has to be eaten ? Our Lord has made this easy for us in the 6th of St. John's Gospel. The Israelites had eaten manna in the wilderness, but this was only a type of better bread. Jesus said unto those who followed Him, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven ; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto Him, ' Lord, evermore give us this bread.' " Christ is the true Bread. " And Jesus said unto them, ' I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to Me shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst " (verses 31 to 35). Now this is the heavenly food, and the Psalmist has said that it strengthens man's heart. This is the Bread, without which no child of God can live here upon earth. It is not such bread as that alluded to in the verse which follows our text : " Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? " Jesus is the True Bread from heaven which every believer feeds upon. How is this Bread eaten ? The appetite of desire to feed upon Christ is the work of the Spirit. Eating and drinking is the language of faith. He who believes in Christ eats and drinks Christ spiritually. We believe and are sure that Christ is the Son of the Living God and has the words of eternal life.

But our text speaks of *wine* : " Buy *wine*." What is this wine for ? Why, to refresh and to cheer the child of God. This wine makes glad the heart of man. But what does this wine represent ? Is it not the love of God ? The wise man says in his song : " Thy love is better than wine." There is the wine of the Gospel feast. In the 25th chapter of Isaiah we read at the 6th verse : " In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." I am inclined to think that triune love is set out in this gospel feast. The love of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is wine on the lees well refined, which means old and pure wine. What can be older and

purser than the wine of the love of God, the wine of the blood of Christ, the wine of the grace of the Spirit. This is the good old wine of the Kingdom. The blood of Jesus Christ is the wine which cheers both God and man. And the wine of the grace of the Spirit makes persons drunk as it did on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 13). Their hearts were filled with the wine of the Spirit, they were refreshed and cheered, and hence they could go forth and speak boldly the things concerning the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will remember the advice given to King Lemuel by his mother (Prov. xxxi. 6, 7): "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish." The perishing soul is the right one to receive a strong drink of God's everlasting love. "And wine unto those that be of heavy hearts." These are the sorrowful souls who go mourning all the day long. Give them a drink of the love of Christ. Preach His blood as cleansing from all and every sin. "Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more." Drink at the fount of love and feast on the promises of the Gospel. Forget your poverty, for you are rich in the riches of Christ. Think no more of your misery, but of the happiness and pleasures which are laid up for you in heaven. "Buy wine and milk."

Now for the *milk*. What is milk for? Is it not for nourishing, supporting, satisfying, and comforting. This is most suitable food for babes. And some Christians are only babes in Christ. St. Peter says: "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter ii. 2). I will read a portion of the 66th chapter of Isaiah which bears upon this subject. I shall offer no comment upon it, but leave it for you to think about. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: that ye may *suck*, and be *satisfied* with the *breasts* of her *consolations*; that ye may *milk* out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, 'I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye *suck*, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother *comforteth*; so will I *comfort* you; and ye shall be *comforted* in Jerusalem.' And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the Hand of the Lord shall be known toward His servants, and His indignation toward His enemies" (Isaiah lxvi. 10 to 14). The consolations and comforts revealed in the Word, and vouchsafed to the hearts of believers by the Holy Ghost are heavenly nourishment. This milk can only be purchased without money and without price.

I shall now say a few words about the *Invitation*. Some may speak of it as a *command*. I prefer the more gracious aspect of treating it: "*come ye*," "*come ye*," "*come*." We have already described the persons, "YE." Ye thirsty ones, ye bankrupt ones, ye shall be welcome. "Yes," say some, "why do you not give invitations in your sermons?" Well, we do, but we wish to give them at the right time, and to the right persons. "Come ye." Notice the various ways in which persons are said to come to God. God's children shall come, and do come to Him in

*faith*. They come to Him eating and drinking ; eating the bread and drinking the water and the wine which are abundantly laid up in Christ Jesus. They come to God in *prayer*, for they know that it is good for them to draw nigh in this way. They come to Him in *praise* offering up the sacrifices of a broken and contrite spirit, which He does not despise. They come in hope and expectation. They come through our Lord Jesus Christ, for no man can come unto the Father, but through Him (John xiv. 6). Passages are often quoted without giving their connection, which, I think, is very unfair, specially so, when the quotation is calculated to mislead. For instance : " Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out " (John vi. 37). We have not a word to object to this part of the verse, and nothing to fear, but why not quote the whole verse : " All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me : and Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." The Father gives them to Christ, the Holy Ghost works in them the desire to come to Him, and He, with open arms, receives them, and assures them that He will not cast them out. Lower down in this chapter you read that " No man can come to Me." Now suppose we quoted this part of the verse and stopped, would it be fair ? No ! And is it right to say : " Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," and then omit the other part of the verse. No ! Quote the whole verse in each case, and the meaning is clear. " No man can come to Me, except the Father Who hath sent Me draw him " (John vi. 44). This " drawing " to Christ is a wonderful thing. Draw us with the cords of love and we will run after Thee. Draw us by exalting Christ in His suitability to meet all our needs and we will fly to Him. Draw us by the gracious influences of Thy Spirit working in our hearts powerfully, and we shall be found safe in the Arms of Jesus. We rejoice to sound out the words of Christ. " Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Are you sick of your sins, and of your laborious doings ? Are you so heavy laden that you feel your burden will sink you to hell ? If so, then Christ invites you to Himself, and He will give you a welcome. " Come unto Me," says Christ, " and I will give you rest." The great Gospel trumpet has been blown, and shall be blown, and they *shall* come which were *ready to perish* in the land of Assyria, and the *outcasts* in the land of Egypt, and *shall* worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem (Isaiah xxvii. 13). All the children of God shall come and worship the Lord in Zion. They shall come with *weeping* and *supplication*, with their faces Zionward. They shall come and join themselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant which shall not be broken. They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, for the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads : they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isaiah xxxv. 10). Then shall the redeemed realize the presence of God in their midst. Then " they shall hunger no more ; neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed



them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The invitations of the Gospel are always addressed to *character*. "The weary and heavy laden." "The poor and needy." "The weak and helpless." "The hungry, thirsty, and moneyless." Tell us of such, and we can speak to their encouragement and comfort. "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

Dear old Daniel Herbert has three hymns upon this verse, and, though *quaint*, I shall quote one of them and conclude.

"Come, thirsty soul, the waters flow,  
And thou art bid to come ;  
The fountain is both full and free,  
For every thirsty son.

What thirsting souls are thirsting for,  
'Tis God designs to give ;  
'Tis God the Holy Ghost creates  
A thirst for God within.

Come then ye pennyless and poor !  
Who have no price to pay,  
'Tis beggars get the wine and milk,  
This is the good old way.

Go thou and plead atoning blood,  
And thou shalt market well ;  
Christ's blood has pay'd your way to God,  
And rescued you from hell.

Come, poor distressed thirsty soul,  
The Fountain is just by,  
A thousand blessings you may ask,  
For God will not deny.

Come to those living precious streams.  
And drink and take thy fill ;  
What thou art thirsting for, come take,  
It is thy Father's Will."

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# “I WILL DRAW ALL UNTO ME.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 1ST, 1878.

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*In the 12th Chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, and at the 23rd Verse, you will find these words:—*

“AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME.”

WE have several very remarkable sayings of our Lord in this chapter. They generally bear upon His Death. When Judas complained of the ointment which Mary had used in anointing the Saviour's feet, our Lord defended her conduct against his attack and said: “Let her alone: against the day of My burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you: but Me ye have not always” (verses 7 and 8). In the next part of the chapter you have an account of the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem, and on that occasion two very well-known prophecies were fulfilled. “Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the Name of the Lord.” And again: “Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt” (verses 13 and 15). The people rejoiced at the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem; but there was a certain sect which was not pleased. It was the sect of the Pharisees, they complained, saying: “Behold, the world is gone after Him” (verse 19). Again, there were certain Greeks who had come to worship at the feast in Jerusalem on this occasion, and we read that they desired to see Him, saying: “we would see Jesus” (verses 20 and 21). This was no bad sign; they had heard of the miracles which Jesus had performed; and, especially, of the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus replied in the 23rd verse: “The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified.” But, previous to this glorification, there must be His Death, His Resurrection, and Ascension; taking glorification as referring to His triumphant entrance into Heaven. He then illustrates His Death and Resurrection

thus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit'" (verse 24). By this, He sets forth His death and Resurrection. He must die; if He did not, the work would not be accomplished which His Father had given Him to do. But if He died, and rose again, He would bring forth much fruit; the fruit would be the salvation of all the elect. He then speaks of the service of the disciples: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve ME, let him follow ME; and where I am, there shall also MY servant be; if any man serve ME, him will MY Father honour" (verses 25 and 26). God the Father put honour upon Christ, and He puts honour upon all the servants of Christ. At this time, we are told that Jesus was troubled in His Soul. "Now is MY Soul troubled" (verse 27). What was it that was troubling Him? He was about to drink the cup prepared for Him. His soul was beginning to be exceeding sorrowful. The cup of suffering He must drink in due time. He prays to His Father, saying: "Save Me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour" (verse 27). He was a Man of sorrow; He was acquainted with grief; He was baptized with the baptism of suffering; it was a bitter cup which the Lord Jesus Christ drank. He prayed to His Father: "Father, glorify Thy Name. Then there came a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified It, and will glorify It again." The people that stood by thought that it thundered, and others thought that an angel had spoken. Jesus said: "This Voice came not because of Me, but for *your* sakes." (verses 28 to 30). Having stated this, He then refers to the work which was to be accomplished. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto ME. This He said, signifying what death He should die." An exception is taken to this in the 34th verse. And "the people answered Him, 'We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest Thou, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?'" Our Lord replies to this in the verse which follows. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light" (verses 35 and 36). These are some of the remarkable sayings of our Lord only a few days before His Death. In the words of my text you have His Death especially set forth.

*The points which I shall bring before you are these: First, the Person—"And I." And Secondly, what is implied in His being "lifted up from the earth"? And Thirdly, the effect—"I will draw all unto Me."*

I have omitted the word "men," because it is not in the original, but I think it is well supplied. Now, we shall try to speak to you plainly this evening upon this subject.

*First of all then, consider the Person—"I." Who is this Person? Why, this Person is none other than the Mighty God manifest in the flesh. He is described as "being the brightness of His*

Father's glory, and the express image of His Person" (Hebrews i. 3). He is "the image of the Invisible God" (Colossians i. 15), by Whom all things were made, and by Whom all things are held together, and for Whom are all things, and that He, in all things, shall have the PRE-EMINENCE; for He is the Head of the Church and the First-born from the dead. For it pleased the Father that in Him all fulness should dwell. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. But He is not my Saviour, and my Mediator, and my Redeemer, *simply*, as He is God. Nor is He my Saviour *simply* as He is Perfect Man. But He is my Saviour as He is God and Man in One Christ. God, Who can lay His Hand upon Divinity; Man, Who can lay His Hand upon humanity, and, in the wonderful Person of Himself, bring the two, God and man, together. There is a wonderful oneness in all this. The Lord Jesus Christ is One with His Father: "My Father and I *are One*" (John x. 30). There are two natures in the wonderful Person of Christ, yet there is but *one Christ*. There is a wonderful oneness, or union between Christ and His Church. It is a mystical union. He is the Head of the Body, or the members; yet they two are but one. There is then a *triple* union. There is only one such Person,—it is Christ! There never was such another Person, and there never will be such another. He is One with His Father; two Natures in the One Christ; and He and His Church are one. In this wonderful Person we have all fulness. Fulness of the Godhead,—fulness of nature,—fulness of grace,—fulness of power,—fulness of wisdom and knowledge. In Him all fulness dwells. I have thrown out these few words in speaking of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). Now, it was this Christ of God Who was "lifted up" on Calvary. I hope you will not *confuse* the two natures in Christ, nor yet *confound* the persons in the Trinity. There is one God, but three *Persons*, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I shall speak this evening especially of the *Divine Man*; Christ Jesus our only Mediator and Advocate. As the Perfect Man He suffers, and as the Perfect God-man He satisfies.

*This leads me to consider our Second point, upon which I shall dwell more largely. What is implied in the lifting up of Christ from the earth? For the word "lifted up" I may occasionally use "exalted," sometimes "raised up," sometimes "set up;" but all conveying nearly the same idea. The word for "lifted up" is sometimes translated "exalted." Well, here I shall have to ask you to look into the subject, and you must remember of Whom we are speaking—it is of Christ. Now, what would you yourselves consider to be the meaning of "lifted up?" Consider this for a moment. I know that the minds of many of you must be going very far back. When you turn to the 8th chapter of the Book of Proverbs, the whole thing is brought out clearly. In the 12th verse you read: "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." The 14th verse: "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength." "Wisdom crieth*



without ; she uttereth her voice in the streets." "I was *set up* from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (23rd verse). By "wisdom" I understand Christ. An objection has been made to Christ being wisdom in this chapter, because the words "wisdom," and "understanding," are feminine. It is said, on this account, they cannot refer to the Lord Jesus Christ. Allow me to deal with this objection before I proceed to make any remarks upon the verse. When the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as a Prophet, or Priest, or King, or when He is said to be a Sun, or a Shield, or a Defence, or the Word ; these words are all in the masculine. There is no doubt about these words referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. But, mind you, there are words referring to the Lord Jesus Christ which are not masculine. I may remark that there are only two genders in the Hebrew, though it be different in the Greek. Now, if you take the 1st verse of the 2nd chapter of the Song of Solomon, where it is said : "I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys." Do you understand "the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys" to be Christ? I think you do. If so, you have two words which are feminine. But if we pass over to the New Testament (and we have to take the entire Scriptures, and not an isolated word or passage), and read the 14th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, and the 6th verse, Christ says : "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." These three words are all *feminine*. Again, in the 10th chapter, He says : "I am the Door" (verse 9). And in the 15th chapter, "I am the True Vine" (verse 1). And again, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life" (John xi. 25). Christ is the "First-fruits." All these words are *feminine*. And I think there is no person bold enough to say that these words do not refer to the Lord Jesus Christ. And if they do refer to Him, then the objection made against "wisdom" being Christ falls to the ground. But the Lord Jesus Christ is sometimes set forth by *neuter* words. When He says : "I am the Light of the world" (John viii. 12). The word for light is *neuter*. When He says : "I am Alpha and Omega" (Revelation xxii. 13), the words are *neuter*. Now, what do we gather from all this, beloved? Do we not gather this, that He Who is the Christ of God, and the Head of the Church, has sovereign authority to use any language or words He pleases to set forth the excellency and the beauty of His Own Divine Character. I might have given you one or two passages to settle this question from the New Testament ; St. Paul says, that Jesus is "the Wisdom of God," and "the Power of God" (I Corinthians i. 24). Again, Jesus says of Himself : "Wisdom is justified of her children" (Matthew xi. 19). But turning back to the 8th chapter of Proverbs, "The Lord possessed ME in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was *set up*," or "lifted up" as the Head or Representative of the Church, in the counsels of old, "from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (verse 23). In the 30th verse : "Then I was by Him, as One brought up with Him : and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." "I was daily His delight." Yes. The Lord Jesus Christ has been the everlasting Darling of His Father. He is the Person in whom the Father always delights. Again, He was "rejoicing

always before Him." He rejoiced to do His Father's will and pleasure. He rejoiced prospectively. "Rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men" (verse 31). His delights were with His Church to redeem her, and to bring her back, and to present her unto His Father according to that eternal purpose which God the Father purposed in Christ Jesus. Christ in the everlasting covenant was "set up," or "lifted up," or "exalted," as the Head and Representative of His Church. The Father always delighted in His Elect One—Christ, and chose Him as His Servant to do all His pleasure.

But Jesus Christ in the Old Testament was "lifted up" both in *promise* and *prophecy*; in promise, it was said, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head" (Genesis iii. 15). He was "lifted up" as the Shiloh that should come, to Whom the gathering of the people should be (Genesis xlix. 10). "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm xlv. 10). He is the Standard or Banner, raised up, of Whom Isaiah speaks in his 11th chapter: "And to Him shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious." Christ is the standard and ensign of the people. "And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (verses 10 and 12). Need I enlarge upon this. Does not this prophecy point to the Lord Jesus Christ?—"lifting Him up," and "exalting" Him as the One that should come. God hath indeed, "chosen One out of the people, to make Him His First-born, higher than the kings of the earth." With Him His Covenant shall stand fast (Psalm lxxxix. 27, 28). He "shall perform all Jehovah's pleasure." "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." I need not enlarge upon the promises and prophecies, which "lift up" the Saviour.

The Lord Jesus Christ was lifted up in *type*, or *figure*, and in *sacrifice*. There is one very remarkable type when we look into the Book of Numbers and read the account of the brazen serpent which was "lifted up" in the wilderness. "Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, 'We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that He take away the serpents from us.' And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.' And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived" (Numbers xxi. 7-9). Here is the type. Our Lord applies this to Himself, saying: "as Moses "lifted up" the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15). This points to the truth which is recorded in our text,—the lifting up of Christ, on the tree, from the earth, as the one sacrifice for sinners. Then again, in all the sacrifices which were offered, from the time of Abel to the coming of our Lord,

Jesus Christ was exalted, or lifted up. Every sacrifice that was offered upon the altar spoke of or prefigured the one offering of Christ. The burnt-offering, the peace-offering, the meat-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering,—all had their accomplishment in Him Who is the one perfect Sacrifice,—the Lord Jesus Christ. He hath indeed “perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” And that, too, “by one Offering,” the one Sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews x. 14). Thus was Jesus “lifted up” in type, figure, and sacrifice, previous to His coming in the flesh.

The Lord was “lifted up” or “exalted” in His *providential* dealings with His own people and with the nations of the earth. You read in the 2nd Chapter of Isaiah of the Jews who were wealthy, how they indulged themselves in luxury; were lofty, haughty, and became worshippers of idols, but the Lord humbled them and exalted Himself. “Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord *alone* shall be *exalted* in that day.” In the day of Jehovah’s judgments how gladly would they fly from their wealth, their pride, and their idolatry, to hide themselves in the clefts of the rocks, and in the tops of the ragged rocks. And why? Because the Lord is being lifted up in the glory of His Majesty. “The Lord alone will be exalted in that day.” The Lord has been exalted in the throwing down of some nations, and in the raising up of others. What have become of the four great monarchies? What have become of the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman monarchies? They are all gone. The Lord had done with them, and others have been raised up. The present nations of the earth—empires and kingdoms, will all be broken up and rolled away. The Lord will show the greatness of His power. He alone will be exalted in the earth. The Lord is high and lifted up, and sits upon the throne of His glory. He laughs and has all His enemies in derision. He puts down one and sets up another that men may fear and tremble at His presence.

The Lord is exalted by the *appearing* of Christ in the flesh. He grows up as a “tender plant” before God and as a “root out of a dry ground” (Isaiah liii. 2). Of David’s seed, God raised unto Israel, a Saviour, Jesus. “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David” (Luke i. 68-69). Surely, truth has sprung out of the earth, and righteousness has looked down from heaven. The Lord alone was exalted in every doctrine which the Saviour taught, and in every miracle and work which He performed upon the earth.

The Lord was specially “lifted up” in *His death*. Our text is explicit upon this point. “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” This is explained in the next verse. “This He said, signifying what death He should die” (verse 33). Who lifted Him up? Wicked men, you say. True. But wicked men did nothing but what God determined before to be done. Doubt ye my words? Read the 4th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and there you will find that wicked hands were employed as instruments in God’s Hand for crucifying and

putting to death the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews and Gentiles "were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ." "For to do whatsoever Thy Hand"—the Hand of God the Father,—“and Thy counsel determined before to be done” (verses 26-28). “They crucified Him” (John xix. 18). And when He had been lifted up and crucified,—what was it for? Was it for Himself? Was it not as the Substitute of His Church? Was it not as the Sin-bearer of His people? Was it not “the just for the unjust”? (1 Peter iii. 18). And when we see Him on Calvary, putting away the sins of His people, finishing transgression, making reconciliation for iniquity, bringing in everlasting righteousness, sealing every promise and prophecy, are we not struck with astonishment at the amazing work which He accomplished when He was “lifted up” from the earth? How shall we be able to praise Him! When we meditate upon Christ’s work on Calvary—“We are lost in wonder, love, and praise”!!

But the Lord Jesus Christ was “lifted up” from the *grave to sit on the throne of glory*. God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to His own right Hand in the heavenly places, and set Him far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named both in this world and in that which is to come (Eph. i. 20, 21). Men and angels witnessed His ascent (Acts i). And what has God lifted Him up to heaven for? God has exalted Him to be a *Prince* and a *Saviour* for to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins (Acts v. 31). Well, anybody can repent! Yes, indeed! All Judases can repent with pleasure and at leisure. It is not so with the children of God. They have to be brought by the Holy Ghost to acknowledge Him, who alone is the *Prince* and *Saviour*, and who alone *grants* repentance unto life and forgiveness of all their sins. God has exalted Christ and He receives the reward of His work: “God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 9-11).

Again, the Lord Jesus Christ is lifted up in the *preaching* of the Gospel. I will tell you when I think He is lifted up. It is when He is preached as Christ crucified, the Saviour of sinners. We live in a time when almost everything else is preached but Christ and Him crucified. Was it so with St. Paul? No! He said, “We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews”—indeed—“a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor. i. 23, 24). A minister has nothing to fear in preaching the Lord Jesus Christ. Look what follows in my text, “I will draw.” Preach Christ then, in His blessed fulness, as Paul did to the Corinthians, when he said: “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified” (1 Cor. ii. 2). Oh! what a blessed thing it is to have the Gospel fully preached in our pulpits. I say, to have the Gospel *fully* preached. A full and perfect salvation through Him Who



is perfect God and perfect Man. "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord."

This brings us to another lifting up, or exalting of the Lord Jesus Christ; the lifting up or exalting of the Saviour in the *sinner's heart*. How and when does this take place? It is in the regeneration by the Holy Ghost. I will venture to say that before a person is regenerated by the Holy Ghost everything else is exalted, and Christ is abased in the heart of a poor, proud, lofty, lost creature. When the Holy Ghost comes with power into the sinner's soul, then all free-will, and all fleshly service are cast down; and the Lord Jesus Christ alone is exalted in that day. Then He appears as the lovely one, as the perfection of beauty, as the only Spotless One in whom a sinner can stand before a just and Holy God. Brethren, have we been brought experimentally to realize this lifting up of Christ in our own souls by the Spirit of God. He alone does it effectually. Listen to the words of Isaiah in his 59th chapter: "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (verse 19). Satan is an enemy, sin is an enemy, the world is an enemy, these things come in. He Who lifts up the Standard is the Spirit: the Standard is Christ, and "Everlasting Love" is written upon It. Our sins shall not be successful over us. Christ, our Standard, shall triumph over every enemy, and every foe. The child of God shall be brought to realize these words: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

There is another way in which Christ is lifted up; and that is in a Christian *man's life*. How does this appear? How is Christ lifted up in a Christian man's life? St. Paul puts it thus—(and I like to use a Scriptural illustration whenever I can do so)—he says: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). A Christian man's life is a life of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A Christian man's life is a life of holiness. Yes, indeed, a real child of God desires to have done with sin. He desires to have done with the world, and to have done with Satan. He feels this, for he knows these are enemies, and he cannot be on their side. He desires to be found always on the side of Christ. He is a humble and lowly follower of the Saviour. He speaks well of His Name and manifests innocent and holy boldness for Him before men. Thus is Christ lifted up in his life now. His is a practical exaltation of the Saviour before an ungodly and wicked world. Beloved, they who are thus lifting up Christ here upon earth, shall hereafter exalt Him in the kingdom of His glory. They shall ascribe "Salvation to our God Who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," for ever and ever (Revelation vii. 10, 12). He will then be exalted. He will, indeed, be lifted up as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." From what we have now stated, you will see to some extent what is implied in the lifting up of Christ.

We now come to a consideration of our third point, the effect: "I will draw all unto Me." The effect of the lifting up of Christ is *threefold*. There is the judgment of this world, the prince

of this world is cast out, and all are drawn to Christ. "Now is the judgment of this world." By the word judgment we understand "decision" or "crisis." The "crisis" had come when it should be decided concerning the world and whose it should be. The question was settled on the Cross. Christ "spoiled principalities and powers; He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself" (Col. ii. 15). All things have been put in subjection to Christ, (Hebrews ii. 8). "The Prince of this world is cast out." Satan has been condemned, and he, as the accuser of the brethren, has been cast out of heaven, and shall be cast out of the Church, and out of each saint (Revelation xii. 7-11). And, finally, shall he be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone with all his followers (Revelation xx. 10).

"*I will draw all unto Me.*" This is a very wonderful subject. And I dare say that some of you have wished me to be at it before this. Well, I will say a few things upon it. One of the first things that must strike you is this: that if we are to be drawn to Christ we must naturally be *afar off* from Him. This is just what we are. Now the sinner, in his sins, is dead spiritually, and he is far off from Christ, so far off that he would never, never, never desire to return, were it not that the Spirit of God first works in him the will and the desire. Beloved, this is a more offensive doctrine to men than election itself,—to tell men that they are dead, spiritually,—helpless and powerless, far off from Christ, is shocking. But it is Scriptural, nevertheless. Then, "at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Aliens to Christ,—strangers to Christ,—but now brought nigh to Christ (Ephesians ii. 12, 13). Distance from Christ is implied in this part of our text, "I will draw all unto Me."

Our text says: "*I will draw all unto Me.*" "*I will draw.*" Then there is the *extent* of this drawing, "*all*"; and the Person to whom they are drawn, "*unto Me.*" Well, "*I will draw.*" The Father draws to Christ, and the Holy Ghost draws to Christ. This is explained to us very beautifully in the 6th Chapter of St. John's Gospel, at the 44th verse. "No man" cometh, or "can come to Me, except the Father Who hath sent Me draw him." Now look at what follows: "And I will raise Him up at the last day." Christ never leaves a person when he is once brought to Him, but He keeps him for ever. This drawing is explained as being "taught of God." "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall be all taught of God'" (verse 45). What is this teaching? This is the secret. Why, the Holy Ghost is the Great Teacher. And when He teaches a man, then it is he knows there is nothing good in himself. He breaks his heart for him, and makes him feel very ignorant, and very willing to be instructed. "And they shall be all taught of God." Not one of God's children goes to heaven untaught. "Every man therefore that hath heard,"—some may *hear* and not *learn*,—"Every man therefore that hath *heard*, and hath *learned* of the Father, cometh unto Me." Well, here we have a grand display of the Father's love melting the sinner's heart,—the mighty working of the

Holy Ghost goes on within "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Christ draws by His grace, beauty, and holiness. The sinner feels his need of such a glorious Christ, and flies to Him as the needle to the magnet. "I will draw." Some say that it is clear from these words that Christ never forces, nor drives a person, but draws him. I do not see that they gain anything by this. What do you think about it? Were you dealt with in a rough or smooth way in being brought to the Lord? Come, let us try to be honest with one another. I know that with some of you God has dealt roughly at times. He dealt roughly with St. Paul. If He did not, why did the Apostle cry out so bitterly? The Lord does as He pleases. He either draws, drives, or forces a person to *Himself* as He sees fit. He knows the best way of dealing with each of His children. Let us make use of an illustration: I will *draw*." What more glorious image is there in the whole of nature than the Sun in the firmament of heaven. See how he is described in the 19th Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (verses 1 to 6). Well, it is this Sun which is such a glorious image of the Lord Jesus Christ. You know that it is an ascertained fact that everything upon the surface of the earth is drawn to the centre of the earth; and that everything also that is in the solar system,—every planet, great or small, every comet,—everything, indeed, is drawn to the centre of the Sun. The Sun keeps everything in the solar system in its place. He is the source of all order. The fountain of all the life and of all the light of everything connected with his system. Look at this, and apply it to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "Sun of Righteousness Who has risen with healing in His Wings" (Malachi iv. 2). He is the Centre of attraction in the heavenly system of the Church of God. There is not a saint in the whole of this system, who is not attracted or drawn to the Centre, the Lord Jesus Christ. He holds the whole Church of God in her place. He is the Cause of all order among the saints. He is the Fountain of all life and light to believers. Their life is Christ's and their light is Christ's. Does Christ use no force? Yes, verily, it is the irresistible force of His powerful attraction. "I will draw all unto Me." I scarcely think it worth while to answer objections. Yet some one will say: "Yes, Jesus will draw me, if I will let Him. He will not, or cannot, draw me without, for I can resist Him"; and so on. Well, these are very clever persons, very,—more so than I am. I am, in myself, too weak to boast of my strength. God forbid that I should glory as a poor and fallen creature. I would glory in the Lord Jesus Christ. I delight to glory

in Him Who draws me unto Himself, in spite of every foe. May He be the One great Object of attraction, of love, and of glory.

"I will draw *all*." Now, is not this a clear case that all persons are to be drawn to Christ? Well, will all persons be drawn to Him? Were all those who crucified Him drawn to Him? Were all that dwelt in Judæa drawn to Him? You can return the answer to yourselves, my friends. Well, but then they shall be drawn unto Him. He will draw them unto Him when He comes again, as, in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." There will only be two classes, the sheep and the goats. But I never read or heard of anyone that was a sheep being turned into a goat. Nor did I ever hear or read of a goat being turned into a sheep. There always have been two classes, and there always will be two classes. You cannot alter it. "*All must appear before Him.*" I grant this, but still I think that it is only those who shall be living on the earth at the time our Lord returns that St. Matthew speaks of. But you say, "Will not God judge every man by Christ Jesus the Lord?" To be sure He will. This is clearly revealed in the 17th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles (verse 31): "Will not all the books be opened as in the 20th chapter of the book of Revelation? And will not everybody be judged out of those books?" Well, if you look carefully, you will find that the *books* are kept only for those who are judged according to their *works*. There is only *one book* for the redeemed, and this is the book of life. Beloved, things explain themselves when we compare one Scripture with another. The book of life contains the names of those who have been crucified with Christ, and they shall all hear Him say: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew xxv. 34). With regard to the rest, the goats, they are judged by their works, and they shall receive the merit of them,—“The wages of sin is death” (Romans vi. 23). Well, what do I mean by this word "*all*." The word "*men*" is not in the original. "*All*." Well, I will tell you what I mean. I may be wrong, for I do not set up myself as a Pope amongst you, but still, I do not think I am wrong after all. By "*all*" I mean all the elect, all those whom the Father has given to His Son from everlasting, and for whom the Lord Jesus shed His most precious blood, and whom the Holy Ghost quickens in His own time. "Oh!" some say, "those are the all, are they?" Yes, all those who lived under the Old Dispensation, and were saved, were saved on the credit of Christ's death. They were all drawn to Christ. All the children of God under the Gospel Dispensation either have been or shall be drawn to Christ. When He comes again He will bring His Saints with Him, and He will change His own who are living upon the earth, and give to those who are sleeping in Him their bodies, that they may be glorified together with Him, and then they shall be with Him for ever as their Lord.



Whence "will He draw all" these? I was about to say—from which denomination? Now there will be no denominations in heaven? "No person can be saved by the law or sect which he professes." Not he, indeed! There will only be one sect in heaven, and it will be the one which is now everywhere spoken against (Acts xxviii. 22). This sect is saved in and through Christ Jesus the Lord. He draws them all unto Himself: "with the cords of a man, and with bands of love" (Hosea xi. 4). The loving sympathy of Jesus makes them all fall in love with Him. So acceptable is He to them, and so powerfully does His love operate upon them, that babes and children, men and maidens, young and old, are drawn unto Him. This is comforting to the children of God? "I will draw *all* of them unto Me."

Notice the Person to Whom they are drawn. "Unto *Me*"—"Myself." Are they drawn unto a Church, or unto a Chapel, or unto a Cathedral? Let us look at the text again. It is "unto ME"—"ME." "UNTO ME"—"the Almighty God," Who can keep you and preserve you unto the heavenly kingdom. "UNTO ME"—Who can put down all your enemies, and give you the victory. "UNTO ME"—your Saviour; and there is salvation in no other. "UNTO ME"—your Advocate and your Priest. "UNTO ME"—your Friend and your Brother, "a Brother born for adversity," and the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." "UNTO ME"—the only Foundation on which you are secure and safe. "UNTO ME"—your Strength and Support. "UNTO ME"—your Angel to go before you. "UNTO ME"—your Life and your Light. "UNTO ME"—your Instructor and Guide, your Food and Raiment, your King and Conqueror. "UNTO ME"—"MYSELF"—your "All in All." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all unto ME." Amen and Amen!!

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# “IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

(*Vicar of St. Simon's, Sheffield*),

AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1878.

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*In the 6th Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the first part of the 6th verse:—*

“IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY.”

THE portion of Scripture which I propose bringing before you this evening is one which has engaged the attention of scholars, and of the most learned amongst divines. Many difficulties have been raised in connection with the text and context. I do not intend dealing with all the difficulties which have been raised, nor to trouble you with the views of other men upon this Scripture, but to give you a view of the text and context which commends itself to my own mind, and which I think is in keeping with the tenor of the Word of God generally. In order that we may understand our text rightly, it will be necessary for us to give you some idea of the drift of the Epistle itself. I believe that on a former occasion I very briefly dwelt upon this point when I was addressing you in another church. Some of you might not have heard what I then said, and others may have forgotten. But, be it as it may, it will not be out of place again to remind you of the general design of the Epistle itself. If you turn to the first chapter you will find that the object of the writer is to set forth Christ and His work as superior to every person who had preceded Him, and to every work which had been performed before Him. Hence you read that God in old times spoke “unto the fathers by the prophets.” But, “in these last days,” He hath “spoken unto us by His Son” (verses 1, 2). The Son is greater than the prophets. He is set forth also, as being superior

to the angels. For when He cometh "into the world, He saith, 'And let all the angels of God worship Him'" (verse 6). He is superior also to creation, for all things have been made, and are upheld by Him, yet they shall "wax old" and vanish away. But His years shall not fail. He shall remain and abide for ever. Here is superiority. In the opening of the 2nd chapter you will find that the Apostle sets forth Christ as superior to Moses; and the Gospel of Christ as superior to the law which was given by angels in the Hand of a Mediator. And you read that He has put in subjection to Christ, and not to angels, "the world to come, whereof we speak," which 'world to come,' we understand to be, the Gospel Dispensation. The work of Christ for the Church is then described. He is made for a little while "lower than the angels for the suffering of death," and for the redemption of His people, and afterwards He is crowned with honour and glory, and placed far above angels and principalities and powers. Such honour and dignity were never put upon any creature of God. In the opening of the 3rd chapter you have Christ as the High Priest and the Apostle. Moses is spoken of as a servant serving in the house of God: but the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son placed over the household. In this He is superior. In the 4th chapter you read of three rests, the rest of the Sabbath, a type of the Gospel rest which we have in Christ. The rest of Canaan which was temporal and temporary; and then we have the Gospel rest in Christ Jesus which remains and abides for ever. Here is superiority. In the concluding part of the 4th chapter you have Christ the Great High Priest Who has passed into the heavens. He is superior to Aaron. This subject is continued through the 5th chapter. His Priesthood is not like Aaron's. Aaron and his successors died, but our Priest is a Priest for ever "after the order of Melchisedec" (verse 10). The Aaronic priests were compassed with infirmity, and they could not continue by reason of death, but our Priest takes upon Himself the infirmities of His people, puts away their sins, and becomes the Author of eternal Salvation. Carry this thought right through the Epistle, that Christ and the Gospel, as brought in by Him, are superior to all persons, and to all manifestations of the Gospel as exhibited in types and shadows, during the Old Dispensation. I throw out these things in order to induce you to read the entire Epistle, and that you may confirm for yourselves the few thoughts which I have suggested. Christ in this Epistle is the Prophet of prophets; the Son of sons; the Angel of angels; the Priest of priests; the Rest of rests: the Offering of offerings; the Altar of altars; the Substance of all the types; the Surety and Mediator of a better covenant; the King of righteousness and the Prince of Peace—Jesus—"the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Hebrews xiii. 8). I think from what I have now stated you will be able to gather what is the general design in the Epistle.

Before considering the text itself, I shall have to ask you to look at the verses which precede it, beginning with the first words of the chapter. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ:" but in the margin of your Bibles it is: "Therefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ:" which is a literal translation. This expression

throws us back into the 5th chapter, where you read at the 12th verse : " For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God ; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." What are " the first principles of the oracles of God " ? What do we understand by " the oracles of God " but the Old Testament Scriptures, for so we read in the 3rd chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and the 2nd verse. Also (Acts vii. 38, I Peter iv. 11). The Jews were to teach and to act according to the oracles of God. The elements of the Gospel were contained in them.

Now, what were these first principles or elements concerning Christ and the Gospel ? They are mentioned in the 1st and 2nd verses. " Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection : " Let us go on unto the Gospel, not as set forth in type and shadow, but as revealed in, and made manifest by the Lord Jesus Christ. There are six elementary principles mentioned. The first is " Not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works." This, I do not understand to be repentance from dead works performed by spiritually dead sinners—but repentance as taught by slain beasts. When the beast was slain and offered in sacrifice, the offerer confessed that he deserved to be slain and put to death for his sins. This was an acknowledgment on the part of the pious offerer that sin merited death. The sacrifice offered was a substitute for the offerer, and no doubt, pointed to the only substitutional offering which can take away sin. Repentance was not a formal thing, but a spiritual acknowledgement before God of sins and unworthiness in His sight. Repentance is not a change of mind produced by the creature, but a godly sorrow unto salvation wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The second elementary principle contained in the oracles of God is : " And of faith towards God." " He that cometh to God must believe that He is " (Heb. xi. 6). Our Lord said to His disciples " Ye believe in God,"—this was one of their articles,— " believe also in Me." Jesus came not to preach to them again and again—" believe in God." This was a principle already received and practised by them.

The third principle was " The doctrine of baptisms." Some have taken these baptisms as referring to John's and to our Lord's, but, I think, very wrongly so. You find in the 9th chapter and the 10th verse this expression—" *Divers washings*"—or divers baptisms. You read in the 19th chapter of the book of Numbers of the water of purification. And there was a doctrine connected with it. And what was the doctrine ? Was it not this ? That there was a need of cleansing from sins of the soul as the body was cleansed from its defilement with water. Now water cannot cleanse the soul, but the blood of Jesus can. " The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The fourth principle is this : " And of laying on of hands." Here again we have another principle which was revealed in the Old Testament. We need only read the 4th chapter of Leviticus and we find that the offerer and the offering are one. The doctrine of imputation of sin is there brought out. The doctrine in figure of the Lord Jesus Christ



Who is the Substitute for the sinner bearing away his sin. The doctrine of identification and oneness with Christ of every true penitent.

The fifth principle is the "resurrection of the dead." The resurrection of the dead was a doctrine revealed in the Old Testament. For Abraham himself received his son Isaac from the dead in a figure (Hebrews xi. 19). And "women received their dead raised to life again" (verse 35). That dear old servant of God, Job, foresaw the resurrection: and David could say! "When I awake," "I shall be satisfied" "with Thy likeness."

The sixth principle is: "And of eternal judgment:" or of the judgment which should follow the resurrection as an effect which shall be seen and known. Daniel brings this out very clearly in his 12th chapter "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (verse 2). We have now touched upon the six articles or elementary principles revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures. Now, the apostle leaves these first principles and proceeds to speak of the perfection of things. "And this will we do, if God permit." That is:—He will not preach again and again these first principles. He will not be ministerially laying again and again the foundation of these elementary things—He will pass on from the shadow to the substance—from the prophets and Moses and Aaron and the sacrifices to Christ, and the glorious Gospel as revealed by Him. This will be more comforting and edifying to the children of God, and therefore more important for consideration.

Notice how I read the 4th, 5th and 6th verses. All the verbs are in the aorist—or what is called the historical tense. You will see that I shall omit the little words, "have,"—"have,"—"have,"—since they are not needed to convey the correct idea of the original. "For it is impossible (in the case of those who were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost; and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; and fell away) to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." I hope you will *remember* the parenthesis.

But now look at the text, and I shall divide it into three parts. Perhaps some of you will think that I have been a long time preparing the way. This is very true. But it was important that you should hear what I have said, or, at least, I thought so, to a right understanding of what I am about to say upon the text. "*If they shall fall away.*" I beg you to notice that the Apostle does not in this passage speak of himself, saying, "*I*" and "*We.*" Nor yet of those to whom he wrote, saying, "*You.*" But he supposes a case, and puts it in the strongest possible form, saying, "*Those once enlightened.*" "*If they shall fall away.*" This idea must not be lost sight of in the consideration of this Scripture. And now to the text itself:—*First, Who are the persons here described in the 4th and 5th verses?—Secondly, the supposition, "If they shall fall away," and, thirdly, the consequence:—"It is impossible,"—"to renew them again to repentance," and so forth.*

Now, to the first of these. The persons:—*who are they?* Let us see what is said of them in the 4th verse. It says that in the case of those “who were once *enlightened*.” What is the meaning of the word *enlightened*? It is used three or four times in the Scriptures. You have it in the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians and the 18th verse. “The eyes of your understanding being *enlightened*; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ” Jesus. Surely, the enlightenment here is spiritual enlightenment. You cannot regard such language as being used of any, save those who are real Christians. It cannot be said of mere professors of religion, that they answer to the words of the Apostle. Is a carnal professor a spiritually-enlightened man, or is he not? He may talk with you for months, and years, and deceive you during the whole time upon this point. Talking Christianity does not make a man a Christian. The same original word is translated in the 10th chapter of this Epistle, and the 32nd verse, thus: “Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were *illuminated* ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” Who endured them? Mere professors? Not so. Who then? Why, those who were *enlightened* or *illuminated* by the Holy Ghost. These are the persons to endure afflictions. The idea in the word *enlightened* is light shining in the understanding. It is Spiritual eyesight. And to be “once enlightened,” means to be completely, entirely, and perfectly enlightened. You see then if this be so, that this language is spoken of real Christians.

The *second* thing said of these persons is this, that they have “tasted of the heavenly gift. You say there are many heavenly gifts spoken of in the Scriptures. So there are. Can you mention them? “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (James i. 17). You see that this is said of many gifts. Faith is a gift. Repentance is a gift. Salvation is a gift. And then you read in the 5th chapter of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans of the gift by grace which is the “gift of righteousness,” and of the gift of God which is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord, and the gift of the Holy Ghost as on the Day of Pentecost. But I think that the most excellent gift is spoken of in our text, which is Christ Jesus our Lord. Christ is the gift. You know what Jesus said to the woman of Samaria: “If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, ‘Give Me to drink’; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water” (John iv. 10). When God gives a man Christ, He gives everything with Him (Romans viii. 32). Christ is the great gift, the heavenly gift, and the “unspeakable gift” (II Cor. ix. 15). God had no greater gift to bestow than that of His own Son Jesus Christ. God gave His Son. But look again at the text: “And *tasted* of the heavenly gift.” Yes, “*tasted*.” I may just throw out by the way that some persons have said that this word means to *sip*. Sip, indeed! mere professors sipping Christ. Well, whatever others may say I shall leave to them to determine. I wish to show you the meaning

of the word as it is used in the Scriptures. Read the 16th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and the last verse: "Verily I say unto you, 'There be some standing here, which shall not *taste* of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His'" glory, or in His "kingdom." "Taste of death." What do you understand by it here? It means some "shall not die." It must strike you that this is its simple meaning. Again, read the 8th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. "He shall never *see* death"—"He shall never *taste* of death." What do these expressions mean? The answer is plain,—he shall not experience death; he shall not die. Again, it is said in the 2nd chapter of this very Epistle, and the 9th verse, that the Lord Jesus Christ "should taste death for every man." Now, did the Lord Jesus Christ take a *sip* of death? Was it only a sip? Did He not really die? Did He not really experience death? And when St. Peter speaks of God's children experiencing the grace of Christ, he says: "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (I Peter ii. 3). To taste that the Lord is gracious is to feel the power of Divine grace working in the soul. To "taste the heavenly gift," is to be made a partaker of Christ and to experience His Spiritual influence in our hearts.

"And were made *partakers* of the Holy Ghost." By the Holy Ghost I understand the third Person in the Trinity. Partakers. This word occurs five times in this Epistle, and once in St. Luke v. 7. In the 1st chapter and the 9th verse, it is rendered, "*fellows*." A very singular translation, you say. It is said that the Lord Jesus Christ was "anointed with the oil of gladness above His *fellows*." Christ is the Head. Believers are the members, and they together make up the one mystical body of Christ Jesus. Christ and His fellows are partakers of the same anointing Spirit. You see this. And again, in the 3rd chapter of this Epistle and the 1st verse: "Wherefore, holy brethren, *partakers* of the heavenly calling." Partakers of what? The heavenly calling, or the call which is from heaven? And in the 14th verse of the 3rd chapter, we read "For we are made *partakers* of Christ." The Christian is a wonderful person. Why, he is a partaker of Christ, a partaker of the heavenly call, and is anointed with the oil of gladness; the same oil which fell upon Christ comes down upon all His members. There is another thing that he is made a partaker of, and this is "chastisement." "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are *partakers*, then are ye bastards and not sons" (Heb. xii. 8). And in our text a "*partaker* of the Holy Ghost," which I understand to mean that a child of God is dwelt in and graciously influenced by the Holy Spirit.

"Tasted the good word of God." What is this good word of God? The Saviour Himself is sometimes spoken of as "The Word of God." He is pre-eminently the good word of God. But I think the Gospel is here meant, which is the good seed sown in a man's heart. The good word of faith revealed in a sinner's soul; the good word of promise which is "yea and Amen in Christ" (II Cor. i. 20). Man lives by this good word of God (Luke iv. 4). This is the good word of faith which we preach (Rom. x. 8). And the good word of God which liveth and abideth for ever in the hearts of the children of God (I Peter i. 23-25).

Now, to taste the good word of God, is to experience the blessings of the Gospel and the precious promises which the Gospel contains. Not one thing will ever fail of the good word of God.

“And the powers of the world to come.” I take the world to come to mean the Gospel Dispensation, or the present days of the Messiah. We read in the 2nd chapter of this Epistle, “For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak.” Surely, the Church of God, which is being gathered out during the present Dispensation, is the work for which Christ came into the world. The powers of this world may include miracles, or miraculous power granted to the early Christians, but I incline to the idea that what is meant are those gracious operations of the Holy Ghost in a believer’s soul. “The exceeding greatness of His *power* to us-ward who believe according to the working of His mighty power.” “The effectual working of His power.” “Strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man” (Eph. i. 19, and iii. 7, 16, 20). This is that power which worketh in believers extraordinary things. Power to lay hold on eternal life. Power to wrestle with God and prevail. Power to overcome every difficulty through Christ Jesus. Believers are partakers of these heavenly powers. It must now appear to you that real Christians are spoken of in our text and in the two preceding verses. If a real child of God can be found described in the Scriptures, it is certainly in this passage of God’s Word. But I must hasten to the next point.

*Consider secondly, the supposition—if they shall fall away.* If what has been stated does not describe the spiritually-taught child of God, but a carnal professor only, then, I say, show me the difference between a real and a nominal Christian! There would be no difference. Such language as that which we have been considering can only apply to those who are under the power and Spirit of God. To persons who have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. “If they shall fall away.” Yes, indeed, then the Apostle might say: “I will preach no more.” “It will be of no use.” “The only door of hope is closed against them and there is no other way of salvation open.”

It has been objected that there is no word for “*if*” in the original, and that the expression ought to be translated as a *warning* against the danger of falling from grace. I do not see that much would be gained by so doing. We have similar translations in this Epistle where there is no “*if*” in the original. Take two or three examples. “If we neglect so great salvation” (Hebrews ii. 3). “If we sin wilfully” (Hebrews x. 26). “If we turn away” (Hebrews xii. 25). Whoever questioned these expressions as being hypothetical expressions, although “*if*” be not in the original. I shall now give you several translations of our text. Wiclif: “And ben sliden fer awei.” Tyndale: “yf they faule.” Cramner: “yf they fall away.” Geneva: “If they fall away.” Rheims: “And are fallen.” Stuart and others: “And having fallen away,” and “fell away.” And in our own version: “If they shall fall away.” Now I put it to you. Is not the sense substantially the same in all these translations? And, if so, why should any one object to the expression “If they shall fall away,” being treated as



a supposition? Let one thing, however, be settled in your minds that suppositions or hypothetical propositions prove nothing. If the hypothetical expression in our text were to prove anything, it would be a strong negative. Allow me to show you how such hypothetical propositions are used in the Scriptures. "If perfection were by the Levitical Priesthood there would be no need of another priest after the order of Melchisedek" (Hebrews vii. 11). "If the first covenant had been faultless, there would be no place for the second" (Hebrews viii. 7). "If any man draw back" (Hebrews x. 38). "If ye be without chastisement" (Hebrews xii. 8, 9). Now what do you think about the "*If's*" in these verses? Was perfection by the Levitical Priesthood? Was the first covenant faultless? Do real Christians draw back from Christ? And to whom do they go? Are God's children without chastisement? All these suppositions have the force of strong negatives. The Levitical priesthood was not perfect, the first covenant was not faultless, the real Christian does not draw back from Christ, and he is not without chastisement. When the Apostle says: "If they shall fall away," he admits as truth that which has not necessarily been proved to be true. This he does for the sake of argument. But he never affirms that a true believer, as described in the 4th and 5th verses, either does or can fall away from the high and holy attainments already named. Take another example from the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, the 15th chapter, the 13th and following verses. "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and *if* Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, *if* so be that the dead rise not. For *if* the dead rise not then is not Christ raised: And *if* Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. *If* in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." These suppositions served to show the consequences which would follow, if they had been true. But Christ did rise again from the dead. I hope you see the force of these "*ifs*" in the Scriptures. The Apostle makes a supposition in our text, which, if it were true, he declares that certain consequences would follow. This is the way the Apostle reasons.

"If they shall *fall away*." You say, some persons do *fall away* after all. Yes, we read of the *defection* of some from God—"The angels which kept not their first estate." They "left their own habitation," and are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude, 6th verse). They fell. Adam, our first parent, fell into sin and all his posterity in him. And nations have fallen into idolatry, as we read in the 2nd chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. I simply mention this to shew you that the Jews fell away from the worship of the true God into the worship of idols. Their national fall was great, and they suffered for it. And there is the great apostasy or falling away which will take place in the latter day (Thess. ii. 2, 3). Only those whose names are not written in the Book

of Life will become followers of the Antichrist. Balaam, Judas, Simon Magus, and others may fall from their profession of religion, but never from Christ, for they know Him not in His power. In the 6th of St. John's Gospel we read of some who were with Christ and who followed Him for the loaves and fishes. How aptly are such described by the Apostle: "They went out from us but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John ii. 19). These were not heaven-born children of God. These knew nothing of the experimental realities of religion as set forth by our Apostle. But some one says. Were not these Jews who are spoken of in the text? And were they not acquainted with the first principles of the Christian religion, but were now in danger of lapsing into Judaism? That such a thing befell the Galatian Christians is true, but then the Apostle wrote that very Epistle for the purpose of renewing them again unto repentance. But in our text, "if they shall fall away," they cannot be renewed again to repentance. If there were no other reason for rejecting the Judaising view, this alone is sufficient. Again, the most eminent of God's children have fallen into sin, and may fall repeatedly into sin. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Jonah, Peter, and all the Apostles fell into sin. Does this prove that they fell from having tasted that the Lord is gracious? That they fell from the Holy Ghost? That they fell from Christ, and the good word of God? That they fell from the powers of the world to come? There is not a word said about any such thing, but the fact goes the other way. They all rose again, we are told in the Scriptures, and were finally saved by grace divine. Not one of them was lost. They were renewed again to repentance. The just falleth seven times, but he riseth up again to the praise and glory of God's grace (Prov. xxiv. 16; Psalm cxix. 164; Psalm xxxvii. 24). There is no example in the entire Scriptures of the *final defection* of a *real believer*. Such a thing would contradict the plain statements of Holy Writ. The sheep of Christ shall never perish. They are kept by the power of God for heaven and glory. The hypothetical expression in our text cannot be quoted to disprove the preservation of the Saints in Christ Jesus. The reasoning of the Apostle seems to be this: that in the 4th and 5th verses, he describes, in strong language, the real children of God, and then makes this supposition respecting them: "If they shall fall away," the consequence will be this, that they cannot be renewed again unto repentance.

*Let us now consider what the consequence or effect would be, if the real Christian could fall away as supposed by the Apostle.* "For it is impossible—to renew them again unto repentance" and so on. Some have tried to explain the word "*impossible*" as meaning "*very difficult*." But this is simply absurd. Fancy, it would be "*very difficult*." Yes, indeed, it would amount to an impossibility—the word means literally a thing which cannot be done—"absolute impossibility." "It is impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews vi. 18). Who would think of saying that it is "*very difficult*" for God "to lie?" You would scorn the very idea and justly so. Turn to the 10th chapter and the 4th verse: "For it is not

possible (impossible) that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Was it really impossible, or only very difficult for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins? What think you? Read the 11th chapter and the 6th verse. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Is it only very difficult to please God without faith? You see the absurdity of such a rendering. But this is the course that some persons take. Again, turn to the 8th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and the 3rd verse. "What the law could not do," was it 'impossible,' or was it only 'very difficult' for the law to give life? This word, as it is used in the Scriptures, expresses the 'absolute impossibility' for God to lie, for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins, for believers to please God without faith, and for the law to give life. Why should our text be an exception? For it is absolutely impossible "to renew them again unto repentance." By repentance here I understand, "repentance unto salvation not to be repented of" (II Cor. vii. 10). These persons had been renewed by the renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus iii. 5). Notice what follows. "If they shall fall away" they crucify Christ for themselves: "Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." "Crucify the Son of God afresh." They could not do so literally, but they could do so by acquiescing in all that those did who crucified Him as an impostor and a malefactor. By such conduct they would make the act of those who put Christ to death their own. They would put Him to an open shame by approving of what the wicked Jews had done in heaping upon Him ignominy and contempt. I would ask those who think that the real children of God can finally fall from the perfections of the Gospel of the Grace of God to read and meditate upon the 8th of Romans the 38th and 39th verses. I know the subject this evening is a very difficult one. It requires your undivided attention, and even then, you will not be able to remember all I have said. I hope you will remember three things:—First, that the passage refers to real Christians. Secondly, that it is utterly impossible for them to finally fall away, and thirdly, for argument's sake, if they could fall away, it would be absolutely impossible to renew them again unto repentance.

It only remains for me to say a few words on the 7th and 8th verses in which you have two illustrations. The one in the 7th verse describes the godly; and the other, in the 8th verse, describes the ungodly. The Christian's character in the 7th verse is this: "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God." I need not dwell on the literality of the verse. It is an earthly illustration to set forth spiritual and heavenly truths. What is the land or earth in this verse? All are naturally of the earth, earthy. The earth in this verse is figurative of a Christian man's heart. 'The good ground hearer,' as described in St. Mark's Gospel, the 4th chapter. "The drinking in of the rain which comes oft upon it." What is the rain but God's grace? There is no fruitfulness without this rain. God rains down both righteousness and manna from heaven (Hosea x. 12, Psalm lxxii. 6). The parched earth—the dry and thirsty

child of God drinks in the rain (Isaiah lv. 10, 11). This gracious rain comes off upon the believer. It comes in regeneration and afterwards in sustentation. The early and the latter rain fall in due season (Hosea vi. 3). The effect is fruitfulness. The earth brings forth fruit or herbage meet or answering to them by whom it is also tilled. The fruits of the Spirit, the fruits of repentance, the fruits of righteousness, and the fruits of good works which glorify God. There are winter fruits and summer fruits, and fruits suitable to every season (Jeremiah xl. 10-12). The Father tills the believer's heart with his everlasting love, the Son tills it with his most precious blood, and the Holy Spirit tills it with the perpetual rain of His reviving, refreshing, and comforting showers of grace. God blesses this land. He had blessed it from everlasting. He blessed it in preparing it for the reception of the seed of eternal life and in the receiving of the same. He blesses it in its growth, harvest, and glory. The believer, for he is the good ground hearer, receiveth blessing from God. The believer cannot help praising God for His goodness. He knows that his sins are forgiven and that his name is written in heaven. Soon he shall hear a well-known voice, saying, "Come, thou blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world" (Matthew xxv. 34). "This is all very well," some one may say, "but is it not very great presumption on your part to say that Christians can be sure of their salvation and of going to heaven"? I do not think it is very great presumption. I will give you my idea of presumption. It is this. If I were to expect some one of you to give me a £1,000 as I pass out of the Church to-night, and that person had given me no reason to expect it, this I should call presumption. But, if any lady or gentleman had promised to give me a £1,000, it would be no presumption on my part, if I expected that person to fulfil his or her promise. So I say that there is no presumption on the part of God's children in their believing that God will keep His promise. He has never yet broken His Word. If we doubt His promise shall we not rather be throwing discredit upon Him? Shall we not be saying something like this: It is very difficult for God to lie, but He does. I say this with great reverence, but it is to show you the absurdity of false reasoning.

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected." This is descriptive of a natural man's heart. The wicked in their actions are thorns and briers (Numbers xxxiii. 55). This unfruitful land is rejected. It is reprobate (II Timothy ii. 8). It is nigh unto cursing. Some are cursed children (II Peter ii. 14). Their end or doom is to be burned. I would recommend you to read the following Scriptures (Isaiah i. 31; Isaiah x. 17, 18; Isaiah xxvii. 4).

The child of God will feel the thorns and briers so long as he remains in the land of the Philistines. God rejected the Canaanites of old, yet, He suffered them to be pricks in the eyes and thorns in the sides of the Israelites to vex them (Num. xxxiii. 55). So it is now, but their end is to be burned. Briers and thorns within, and briers and thorns without, will come to the same end of burning and destruction. The Apostle



having thus addressed the Hebrew Christians, expresses himself in comforting and consoling words to them—"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." What the Apostle said to those Hebrew Christians so now we would say to you: "My beloved brethren, but we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." May God give a blessing with His Word for Christ's sake. Amen!!

If ever it could come to pass  
 That sheep of Christ might fall away,  
 My fickle, feeble soul, alas!  
 Would fall a thousand times a day:  
 Was not God's love as firm as free,  
 He soon would take it all from me.

I on the Lord alone depend,  
 (At least I to depend desire,)  
 That he will love me to the end;  
 Be with me in temptation's fire;  
 Will for me work, and in me too,  
 And guide me right, and bring me through.

No other stay have I beside;  
 If this can fail, my soul must fall:  
 I look to Christ to be supplied  
 With life, with will, with power, with all.  
 Let others glory in their store,  
 Jesus, I know, relieves the poor.

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# “YE ARE COME TO MOUNT ZION.”

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## A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE

REV. J. BATTERSBY

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AT VERULAM DISTRICT CHURCH, LAMBETH, LONDON,

THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 3RD, 1878.

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*In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the 12th Chapter, and at the first part of the 22nd verse, you will read these words:—*

“BUT YE ARE COME UNTO MOUNT SION.”

WHEN I last addressed you I endeavoured to point out to you the design of the writer in this Epistle to the Hebrews. The drift in the Epistle we saw, was to set forth Christ and the Gospel brought in by Him as superior to every person and to every work going before Him. It is my intention this evening to follow up the idea which I then threw out, and this I shall do by showing you that there is a great contrast between the legal and the Gospel dispensation in this chapter, beginning at the 18th and running on to the end of the 24th verse. Before taking up the subject I wish to say that it has been denied that this Epistle is addressed to Hebrew Christians. I do not agree with the objectors, and the reasons why I disagree with them are twofold; first, because the writer in this Epistle addresses those to whom he wrote as “holy brethren,” and “partakers of the heavenly calling” (Hebrews iii. 1). It is not sufficient to say “holy brethren,” or “sanctified brethren,” but “partakers of the heavenly calling,” or of that call which is from heaven, even God the Holy Ghost’s call. These persons also are addressed, in the concluding chapter of the Epistle, thus, in the 17th verse: “Obey them that have the rule over *you*, and submit *yourselves*: for they watch for *your* souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for *you*.” In the 20th verse he prays thus: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make *you* perfect in every

good work to do His will, working *in you* that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. And I beseech *you, brethren*, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto *you* in few words." I think that you can scarcely say that this language is applicable to any persons save those who are real Christians, or to put it in a more modest form, those who were treated as real Christians. A second reason why we look upon the persons addressed as Hebrew Christians is this, because the writer of the Epistle speaks of himself as one with those to whom he wrote in spiritual and eternal things. Thus in the 14th verse of the 3rd chapter he says: "*We* are made partakers of Christ." In the 4th chapter and the 3rd verse: "For *we* who have believed do enter into rest." The 14th verse: "*We* have a great High Priest that has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let *us* hold fast our profession. For *we* have not a High Priest Who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we* are, yet without sin. Let *us* therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that *we* may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." At the close of the 6th chapter: "Which hope *we* have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for *us* entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." The 10th chapter is full of the same thing, for we read that *we* have a "High Priest over the house of God," "that is passed into the heavens," therefore, "let *us* draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having *our* hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and *our* bodies washed with pure water." And at the close of the 11th chapter: "God having provided some better thing for *us*, that they without *us* should not be made perfect. Wherefore seeing *we* also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let *us* lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us* and let *us* run with patience the race that is set before *us*, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of *our* faith." Now, taking these few passages from the Epistle itself, I think you must, and indeed, every unprejudiced person must, come to the conclusion that the persons to whom this Epistle was written were real Christians—Hebrews converted to Christianity. And of such, our text says: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion."

*In treating our subject I wish to bring it before you under two heads: First, negatively: Ye are not come unto Mount Sinai. And secondly, positively, but ye are come unto Mount Zion.* On the first of these, it is not my intention to dwell at any very great length.

The first is the *legal* dispensation. This is the *negative part*: "Ye are *not* come unto the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness and tempest." This refers to Mount Sinai in Arabia, *where* and *when* the law was promulgated with great majesty and glory. I shall have to ask you to read with me two passages from the Old Testament. My comment upon the same will be brief, for they speak for themselves. Let us turn to the 19th of Exodus and read the account, beginning at the 10th verse: "And the Lord said

unto Moses, go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day : for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the Mount, or touch the border of it ; whosoever toucheth the Mount shall be surely put to death ; there shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through ; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live : when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the Mount. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people ; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day : come not at your wives. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud ; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God ; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire : and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered Him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount : and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mount ; and Moses went up." You will see from the account which I have read (and I have preferred reading it to quoting it, or to giving a running exposition upon it), the majesty and the glory with which the law was promulgated on Mount Sinai by Jehovah Himself. Again, in the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy, and at the 22nd verse we read : "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice : and He added no more. And He wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness (for the mountain did burn with fire), that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders ; and ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire : we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now therefore why should we die ? for this great fire will consume us : if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived ?" These Scriptures very fully describe the giving of the law, which was for the legal dispensation of Moses, and which was to continue until Christ came, Who is the end and perfection thereof for righteousness and salvation to everyone that believeth. You are not come unto a palpable, material, and carnal mountain, and unto a burning fire, and blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and sound of trumpet, and voice of words. These were the accompaniments in the giving of God's holy law. The burning fire was a symbol of God's



presence. "Our God is a consuming fire." Speaking out of blackness, and darkness, and fire, is God convicting and condemning the sinner. The legal dispensation of Moses, though majestic and glorious, was a ministration of condemnation and death (II Cor. iii. 7-9).

Now, what was the *effect* upon the people as they heard the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud? It is said: "that all the people that was in the camp *trembled*." Moses, himself, said "I do exceedingly fear and quake." Did Jehovah come to this people saying, "Keep the law and you shall go to heaven by it?" No! He came in majesty and power, making them feel their unworthiness to appear in His glorious presence. This is the way God comes into a man's soul by the law. He convinces him of his sinnership and of his just deserts in His sight. St. Paul speaks thus in his Epistle to the Romans: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.' But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Romans vii. 7-9). The commandment came in glory and majesty, in blackness and darkness, showing him that the just judgment of God was upon him for his sins. Then he says: "sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Still, "the law is holy and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." This was the very end in the giving of the law, to expose sin and transgression. When a man is tried by the law he falls so far short of its requirements that he is slain by it, and this is that ministration of condemnation and death which was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. I wish to be very plain and explicit upon this point, because there is at the present day so much mixture of the law and the Gospel. To hear some persons preach, you would think there is no difference between them. Men are addressed as if they could keep the law to a certain extent, and that Christ will then make up the deficiency. There is too much of this. With regard to the law and its use, I wish to explain myself most simply and plainly. I will do so by an illustration; and when you reflect upon the illustration which I shall give you, I hope the Spirit of God will shew you what you are by nature, as you stand convicted by the law of God in his sight. If you stand before a looking glass, it shows you your spots and defilement. It is by means of the looking glass you see your blemishes and imperfections. This is just what the law of God does. It shows us our defilement, our failings, our deformities, and uncleanness. But mark! Whoever went and washed himself in a looking glass? The looking glass cannot take away the defilement, though it can show it. It cannot take away the spots and blemishes though it can show them.

So it is with the law of God, it shows a man his sins, but it has no power at all to remove them. This is the use of the law. A blind man may stand before a looking glass, but he will see nothing. So a person who is spiritually blind may stand before the law of God, but he will see nothing. "Wherefore serveth the law"? It could not save the sinner, neither could it give us power to believe, nor yet could it unfold and explain Christ to us. "It was added because of transgressions," to expose and lay bare our sins before us. Its continuance is until Christ comes in His blessed fulness and power delivering us from Sinai and bringing us to Zion. Believers are not under the law, but under grace.

Now, in the 19th verse which precedes our text, it is said, that when they heard "the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, which voice, they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not endure that which was commanded, 'and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.' And so terrible was the sight that Moses said, 'I exceedingly fear and quake.')" Look how these persons entreated that they might not hear the voice of God any more. They entreated also that there might be a mediator between them and their God. And so Moses steps in between. They could not bear to come into the presence of God according to the law. No man can see God and live legally. The law of God has nothing for the unsaved sinner, but "a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary." The legal dispensation was holy, just, good and glorious, but which is now done away in Christ. I have now to speak to you of the gospel dispensation which excelleth in glory, and which glory is not to be done away.

*Secondly, positively, ye are come unto Mount Zion.* This is the positive part of our subject which we shall now proceed to consider. Well: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion." I take this as standing in contrast with Mount Sinai which was palpable—a mountain that could be touched. This gospel mountain could not. Sinai could be seen and felt and handled, but Zion is of a spiritual and eternal nature. It is true literally that out of Zion the Lord Jesus Christ came according to the prophecy: "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans xi. 26). But when we speak of Mount Zion which is brought before us in our text, we understand by it, the Church of God under the gospel dispensation. I take this to be a fair definition of what is meant by Mount Zion. The 87th Psalm is full of good things for Zion: "His foundation is in the holy mountains." The foundation of the Lord is in the holy mountains. Notice the holy mountains. There may be here an allusion to Jerusalem and the mountains connected therewith literally. But this would fall very far short of the holy mountains in which is laid the foundation of the Church of God. Now if we can carry our minds back to the holy mountains, the eternal purpose of God, His unalterable decrees and everlasting covenant, "ordered in all things, and sure" (II Samuel xxiii. 5), we shall discover Christ as the One Foundation laid in eternity. Treasured up in Jehovah Jesus are "the chief things of the ancient

mountains, and the precious things of the everlasting hills." "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion,"—the ordinances of the Church under the gospel dispensation—"more than all the temporary dwellings of Jacob." The Lord loves the gates of righteousness (Psalm cxviii. 19). He loves the gates of praise and thanksgiving (Isaiah lx. 18). The one gate of entrance into the Church of God is Christ Jesus. By this gate the believer goes *in* and *out*. He enters by this golden gate into the Church Militant here in earth, and goes out by it into the Church Triumphant—to heaven and glory. But let us pass on. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." Zion is here the city of God. Glorious things are spoken of this city. God loves her and dwells in the midst of her. The river of free grace runs through her and gladdens all her inhabitants. The walls of this city are salvation. The glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. May peace and prosperity ever reign within her! A good report shall go forth of converts from among the heathen. "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know ME: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia, this man was born in her. And of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her." There is no such thing as being a member of the living Church of God without being born again of the Holy Ghost. The stability of this city is secured. Jehovah Himself will establish her and take care of her, she shall never be moved. "The Lord shall count, when He writeth up the people, that this man was born there." The Lord takes notice of all His saints. They are engraven on the palms of His Hands, and in that day when He makes up His jewels not one of His precious ones will be missing. All shall join in the anthem of praise as in the 7th verse: "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee." All the springs of grace that come into the city of the living God, come from the Fountain of everlasting love. All my fresh springs are in HIM Who is "the Fountain of gardens and the Well of living waters." The Church is refreshed, and the effect is joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. There is a beautiful description of the City of God in the 48th Psalm. God is greatly praised in her. She is the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation for she stands in her Lord. She is the joy of the whole earth, and the city of the great King Jesus. Her enemies may go round about her and count her towers, observe her bulwarks, and long for the destruction of her palaces. They marvel, they are troubled and haste away. And why? Because her God will protect and keep her for ever and ever. This Zion and City of God is immoveable, for "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even for ever," "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever" (Psalm cxxv). There is no such thing as removing this Zion of which I am speaking. It cannot be removed out of the love of God, and out of the covenant of grace, and out of the hands of Christ, and out of the power of the Spirit, and out of the Book of Life. "God is in the midst of her, she shall never be moved: God shall help her

right early" (Psalm xlv. 5). "Ye are come unto Mount Zion." I want you to read another Scripture upon this subject. It is in the 14th chapter of the Book of the Revelation and the first few verses. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb, stood on the Mount Sion, and with Him a hundred and forty and four thousand," a definite square number to set forth an indefinite number which no man can number, "having their Father's Name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." You will perceive that there is exclusiveness here and that the redeemed only can learn this song. I ask who amongst us can sing this song of redeeming love and blood? Believe me those who have been bought by the Blood of Jesus and quickened by the Spirit can sing this song, and look upon the Saviour as the Chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely One. Now "These are they which were not defiled with women;" mark this, "for they are virgins." This shows their chastity, they "were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." They had not committed fornication with the false Churches which are in the earth, but were the spouse of Christ. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb." Notice these words: "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." My brethren, does the law of God find a man without "guile," and "without fault," as it comes to him in his natural state. Alas! Alas!! But the Gospel of the grace of God reveals to us our standing in Christ in Whom alone we are faultless before the Most High. These holy and faultless ones stand on Mount Zion, and being filled with the Spirit, speak in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts unto the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I shall now pass on to another feature in the description here given of the Church of God. "*And unto the City of the living God.*" I take this as another expression to illustrate the same truth. "The city of the living God." There are many false gods and false lords, but to us there is only *one* true and *living* God. There is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the Church, by whom are all things, and we by Him; and one Holy Ghost the quickener and sanctifier of all the elect people of God. When we speak of the City of God we mean that Spiritual City which abides for ever. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews xiii. 14). "Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." This is the heavenly city—Jerusalem—and not a carnal and palpable city upon the earth. An earthly city would never satisfy the children of God. They need a city which has God for its builder and maker. St. John saw



“this great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (Revelation xxi. 10). This city has its twelve foundations garnished with precious stones. It lieth four square and is every way equal. What a glorious city the Church of God really is, when we are able to see it and understand it as the Apostle has described it. You read in the 26th of Isaiah an account of this fortified city. “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.” The walls and bulwarks of this city are God’s appointed salvation. This salvation is triune, Jehovah Himself is a wall of fire round about this city (Zech. ii. 5). The Angel of the Lord, which is Jehovah Jesus, encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them (Psalm xxxiv. 7). The Spirit of the Lord lifts up His standard against all enemies, so that no weapon which is formed against the Church shall prosper. There is no disappointment in this salvation. God is faithful and true. Now there is great spiritual traffic carried on in this city. I mean sweet and spiritual intercourse and communion with God. All heavenly blessings come down into this city on the full and flowing river of free grace. The glorious Lord Himself is unto His people a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein go no galley with oars. Creature merit and creature doings are all excluded (Isaiah xxxiii. 21).

Our Apostle further describes the church of God as “*the heavenly Jerusalem*.” Why speak of it as heavenly? Because, it stands in contrast with the earthly Jerusalem. The Church of God is of heavenly origin. She is blessed with heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus. Every inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem is born from above. Whatever we have from the earth is earthy, and must perish. Perish our sins and our sorrows, perish our carnal desires and worldly-mindedness. That alone will endure for ever which is heavenly. New hearts and new spirits in Christ Jesus now, and in the resurrection morning—new bodies—heavenly, glorious, spiritual, and powerful. “Behold, He maketh all things new.” Ye are come near unto Mount Zion and the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem. I have so far tried to show you that this language describes the Church of God under the gospel dispensation. We shall have to speak to you now of the angels.

*And to an innumerable company of angels, or, and to myriads of angels.* “What have christians to do with angels, you say?” We find angels often mentioned in the word of God. Read the 68th Psalm and the 17th verse. “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels.” Daniel says that they are “ten thousand times ten thousand.” And the Psalmist (ciii. 20) calls upon them to bless the Lord. They excel in strength and do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. God can employ any instrument He pleases for the accomplishment of His purpose. Poor fallen conceited man often thinks God cannot do without him. God employed angels when He gave the law, He gave the law “by angels in the hand of a mediator” (Galatians iii. 19). God has frequently employed them in missions of mercy, and in missions of judgment. An angel proclaimed the birth of the Messiah. The heavenly hosts were there also saying:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men” (Luke ii. 14). Our Lord had “legions of angels” at His command (Matthew xxvi. 53). They witness to His resurrection “He is not here; for He is risen” (Matthew xxviii. 6). Angels witnessed the ascent of Jesus, and declared that He would return in the same manner as He was seen go up to heaven (Acts i. 11). He shall come again with thousands of His mighty angels (II Thess. i. 7). Angels are employed in gathering in the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, and carrying them into Abraham’s bosom (Matthew xxiv. 31, Luke xvi. 22). Now ye are come “to an innumerable company of angels, the elect angels, that never fell.” The same God and mighty Saviour upheld them, just as He upholds you. When I say that the God of angels is our God, I do not mean that they have been redeemed and saved like us, but that they have been preserved and kept from falling. The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of angels—even of all principalities and powers in the heavenlies. All the angels of God must worship Him. Consider this innumerable throng falling down before Him, and “crying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Revelation v. 12). This is an innumerable company and “a general assembly” of angels before the throne of God and the Lamb in heaven. Meditate upon these things.

*And to the Church of the firstborn written in heaven.* “Christ is the Firstborn among the many brethren.” All these brethren first assembled in Christ their Head, and then with Him on Calvary, and now vitally, and from day to day they are assembling together by the power of the Spirit of God, and finally, they shall assemble before Him in glory to give Him all the honour and praise of their Salvation. What an assembly when all the elect of God shall have been gathered in! A multitude which cannot be numbered!! But to these words: “The Church of the firstborn.” These are believers who are called the *firstborn*. The Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to seek and to save a lost people. He did not come to give persons a chance of saving themselves. This would have been a failure. He came to save the Church and He has done it. “Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her; that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. v. 25–27). This is definite and cannot be mistaken. In man’s work everything is marked with failure. Now all those for whom Christ died must be *firstborn*, or *born again* of the Spirit of God, before they can go to heaven. When Jehovah reckons up His saints, He will say of each and all, “This and that man was born in Zion.” These firstborn ones take their place above the angels for they are in Christ, and He, as the Head, has the pre-eminence in all things (Eph. i. 20–23. Col. i. 18). My friends, many try to magnify and praise man’s work as if it were God’s work. Whatever springs from carnal man must perish—down with it—down with it even to the

ground. It is of no use admitting that we are quite right, because we wish to go to heaven. I would speak to you as if I were never to address you again. If any of you be relying on an atom of your own doings, or if you think that by coming into this church, or by going into that chapel, you will help yourselves to heaven, you are on a wrong foundation. You must be first born of the Spirit, and this is the way that each of the redeemed is brought into the living family of the firstborn, written in heaven. This is coming into the Church of the firstborn. To be *written in heaven* is a grand thing, is it not? If your name were only written in a book kept in an office, someone not very favourable to you might get at the book and cross your name out. Blessed be God, it is not so with those whose names are written in the book of life. God is His own Book-keeper, and no one can cross the name of a saint out of His book. Those whose names are written in God's book are brought to know Jesus in the fulness of time, and to become followers of Him whithersoever He goeth. I beseech you to consider well that only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life can enter into the holy city. The gates are shut against every unclean and unsanctified creature (Rev. xxi. 27. Rev. xxii. 14, 15). Beloved, we are either *in* or *out* of the book of life. If *out*, there is no entrance for such into the heavenly Jerusalem. If *in*, the name of each shall be called in due time, and he shall enter in through the gates into the city, and eat of the tree of life and live for ever.

*And to God the Judge of all.* Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? If a soul perishes, God will do right by that soul, and judge it according to the law of works. And all must be condemned to death who are under the law. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). God will wrong no one. The saints have been judged and condemned to death in Christ. They have suffered in Him and paid the penalty of the law in Him. God does not require a second payment for the same debt. Christ is the great Paymaster. He has settled the account. Jehovah now speaks in the gates of justice to broken-hearted sinners, thus: "This poor sinner's account is settled, his sins and iniquities are forgiven him, let him pass on." He will not proceed against the sinner, for he is saved with an everlasting salvation.

*"And to the spirits of just men made perfect."* These persons belong to the Church of the living God. They belong to the heavenly Jerusalem. But who are "these righteous men made perfect?" They are those who stand complete in Christ's righteousness. Some of these righteous spirits have taken their flight from their earthly tabernacles, and are now before the throne of God. Some are still living upon the earth battling against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Church in heaven and the Church on earth have but one centre—even Jesus Christ—in Whom they meet. Righteous spirits are perfect in Him.

*And to Jesus, Mediator of a new covenant.* What a blessed covenant that must be which has Jesus for its Mediator. We have already considered some of the things connected with the old covenant of Sinai. The Covenant of Grace is explained for us in the 8th of Hebrews:



“This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord ; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts ; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people ; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord:’ for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest” (verses 10 and 11). Now, consider, for here is the beauty of the new covenant : “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (verse 12). This is the very essence of the new covenant. And why does God forgive sins and iniquities ? Is it not because Jesus is the covenant of the people ? Is it not because the One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, has put away the sins of His people by the sacrifice of Himself ? Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator and Messenger of the New Covenant. It is in reality the old and everlasting covenant, but under the gospel dispensation, it is new in its manifestation as administered by the Son of God in the flesh.

“*And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*” The blood of sprinkling. Blood was sprinkled upon the door posts of the Israelites in Egypt before the destroying angel passed over them. Where the blood was sprinkled the destroying angel could do nothing. The people were in perfect safety, because the blood had been sprinkled upon their doorposts. The sprinkled blood was the ground of their security. Again, Moses took the blood and sprinkled both the book and the people to sanctify them to the Lord. This blood was the blood of sanctification, and of holiness. The priest took blood and sprinkled the mercy seat, consecrating that within the veil. These things were but typical of the blood of sprinkling, spoken of in our text. The blood of Jesus sprinkled upon the door posts of our hearts is our security and safety. The destroying angel of justice and judgment can do nothing. He sees the blood and passes over. The blood of Jesus Christ purifies and purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Here are sanctification and holiness to the Lord. “Brethren, we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh ; and having an high priest over the house of God ; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts *sprinkled* from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Here is consecration to the Lord (Hebrews x. 19–22). Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling which speaks peace to all the elect seed. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” Election is a sovereign act of Jehovah Father. “Through sanctification of the Spirit.” This is the work of the Third Person in the Trinity : “Unto obedience and *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ.” Here is the Saviour’s work in life and in death for His Spiritual Israel. The sprinkled blood of Christ speaks better things than the blood of Abel’s sacrifice ever spoke. Yes, better things than Abel himself ever spoke by faith, either in his life or by his death. The sprinkled blood of Jesus speaks peace and satisfaction both to God and man. Precious Blood ! Precious Blood ! !



A few words on “*Ye are come*” and I shall conclude. Ye are come from Sinai to Zion—from the law to the Gospel—from Moses to Jesus. “Ye are come.” There are some persons who seem to stand half-way between Sinai and Zion. They have one eye upon the former and the other eye upon the latter. They look askance. They belong to the “*Squinting class.*” They are abhorrent both to the law and to the Gospel. To have come to Zion is to have been translated from darkness into light—from the power of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. “Ye are come” by the love of the Father, and by the blood of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Ghost. “Ye are come” in faith and prayer. The great Gospel trumpet has been blown and you have heard it, and now, you, who were ready to perish and were outcasts, have come into the holy mountain and are glad to worship the Lord in Zion. You are citizens of no mean city—the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Myriads of angels are your companions in praise and adoration of Jehovah. God is your Judge. And you are fellow heirs of eternal glory with the righteous whose names are written in heaven. “Ye are come” to the choicest diamond and the brightest jewel in the Church of God, even Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose sprinkled blood cleanses from all sin.

I have now done, having shown you the *contrast* which runs through this Epistle to the Hebrews. This is perhaps the last time I shall ever address you upon this Epistle. May the words which have been spoken to you be owned and blessed of God both to your souls and to mine. And to His Triune Name be ascribed all honour and praise both now and evermore. Amen! And Amen!!

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